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KETURAH-COLLINGS.

LADY DOROTHY GATHORNE-HARDY.

16, N. Audley St., W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
<i>Our Portrait Illustration: Lady Dorothy Gathorne-Hardy ...</i>	181, 182
<i>The History of Soil Inoculation ...</i>	182
<i>Country Notes ...</i>	183
<i>Village Life in France. (Illustrated) ...</i>	185
<i>In the Garden ...</i>	188
<i>Peterhouse Library, Cambridge. (Illustrated) ...</i>	189
<i>A Yeoman of the Seventeenth Century ...</i>	192
<i>The Bar Sinister ...</i>	194
<i>The Scottish Thistle. (Illustrated) ...</i>	196
<i>Country House: Derwent Hall. (Illustrated) ...</i>	198
<i>The Hurdle-maker ...</i>	204
<i>Lilliputian Vampires ...</i>	206
<i>From the Farms. (Illustrated) ...</i>	208
<i>A Book of the Week ...</i>	209
<i>Skating or Pike. (Illustrated) ...</i>	210
<i>Wild Country Life ...</i>	210
<i>Shooting. (Illustrated) ...</i>	211
<i>On the Green ...</i>	213
<i>Correspondence ...</i>	214

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THE HISTORY OF . . SOIL INOCULATION.

IN England it cannot be said that the history of the process called soil inoculation forms a very creditable chapter. To recall all the circumstances is indeed to glorify foreign countries at the expense of our own. In the Journal of the Board of Agriculture, where the proceedings are carefully recorded, the story is told, not of investigation by English experts, but of what has been done abroad. Thus in September, 1904, we are told of what had then been done in Germany. A considerable time has passed since Hellriegel and Wilfarth discovered the organisms that inhabit the root nodules of the various species of leguminosæ, and a few years previous to 1904 considerable excitement was caused by the statement that the Germans had been able to apply these discoveries commercially, and in 1904 the report made by Hiltner and Störmer was summarised in the English journal. It was to the effect that the failure of the nitragin to effect an improvement in the crop when it was sprinkled on the seed was believed to be due to the action of secretions produced by the seed in the early stages of germination. During 1904 a very great number of experiments were carried out in different parts of Germany with pure cultures prepared at the Agricultural Institute at Munich. Of ninety-eight carried out in Bavaria, eighty-one were favourable, nine were without result and eight were undecided. The German Government showed itself very enterprising, and early in 1904 offered the new nitragin free of cost to all members of

the German Agricultural Society on the condition that it was to be used in accordance with the directions that accompanied it. The demand was so great, however, that the free offer had to be withdrawn, and the substance was sold by Professor Hiltner of Munich in quantities sufficient to treat the seed of a half to one acre at the price of 1s. The part that we played in all this is not one to be proud of. Nothing is heard of any independent investigations conducted by the Board of Agriculture. Our officials simply told the English farmers what was being done in Germany and translated certain documents for them. The question to be asked is why did not England, which has always held a foremost place in the agriculture of the world, take up the question in a scientific spirit and have it investigated here?

The next chapter brings us to the investigation of the subject in America. In February, 1905, the English farmers were told that if they wished to obtain a supply of the inoculating material they should apply to Professor Hiltner, whose address was given, and the manner of sending the culture and its use were described. It was stated also that a supply of the material was being obtained from Germany by the Board, and that it would be tested at the various agricultural colleges and experimental farms. Something very different to this had occurred in America. Dr. George D. Moore, after having investigated the subject in Germany, spent several years in working at it on his own account, the expenses being borne by the United States Department of Agriculture. Extensive practical tests were made in 1904, and in agricultural reports it was stated that increased yields, ranging from 15 to 35 per cent., were secured. The material for inoculating an acre of soil cost the Department of Agriculture about one cent. The English Board of Agriculture, which had done nothing on its own account, approached the Hon. James Wilson, the Secretary of the American Department, in order to obtain a supply of the cultures. The directions sent with them were carefully compared with those issued from Germany, but we find no trace of the Government having encouraged any original research on its own account. In 1905, however, the Department of Agriculture obtained cultures and distributed them, and this led to the issue of the report of February, 1906, which was decorated with two frightfully bad and useless photographs of Dr. Hiltner's experiment house. The report might be described succinctly as a brief but mild damnation. The writer of the article arrived at the conclusion that the preparation of these cultures had not yet passed the experimental stage, and a wet blanket was thrown upon soil inoculation in England. Mr. Arthur W. Sutton's communication on another page may be taken as fairly typical of the attitude produced by these proceedings.

But the blame rests entirely upon our own Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. It sent out old cultures, many of which had been in existence a year before they had been applied. We believe that they can be made now in a medium which is for all practical purposes permanent, but that was not the case in those early days. No doubt it may be urged that the Government failed through ignorance. But that is exactly the fault we have to find. The officials of the Board are open to no blame whatever. Their reports are couched in a tone of scientific optimism. That is to say, although they are compelled to admit that the results were unsatisfactory, they look forward to the results of renewed research in the belief that these will perform what is only a promise now. But this does not exonerate the Board of Agriculture, whose duty it was to prosecute the enquiry with all the enterprise, diligence and energy at its disposal. In the end it was left to a private individual, Professor Bottomley of King's College, to discover a medium that would convey the cultures fresh and ready for use to the British farmer. Probably that is not the end. The roots of the alder tree have been found to possess the same capacity for fixing nitrogen, and it is possible that investigation may show this quality not to be confined solely to leguminous plants. Fresh prospects are opened up on every side; but no thanks for that are due to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. No doubt this body is, to a large extent, starved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is a case of penny wise and pound foolish, as it has been abundantly shown that the results of scientific research amply repay the trouble.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Dorothy Gathorne-Hardy. Lady Dorothy is the third daughter of the Earl and Countess of Cranbrook, and was born in 1889.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens, or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



COUNTRY NOTES

THE real state of the unemployed in this country is a matter not easily understood, as it is difficult to determine the proportions between the work-shy and the genuinely out of work. But that there is a certain scarcity of employment, in spite of the general prosperity, is undeniable. Farmers recognise it in the greater plentifulness of men seeking jobs from them. But we are afraid that this is open to a very simple explanation. One of the favourite tasks of farm labourers when they emigrate to towns is that of hodmen to masons, and it is well understood that, whatever be the case in other trades, the building trade has been slack for a long time past. Meantime, the honest unemployed ought to welcome the message sent from Canada, where railroad construction is causing such a demand for navvies and plate-layers. The wages offered amount to 8s. per day, and, though the men are expected to pay their own passage to the port of landing, the railway company will carry them to the scene of labour between Port William and Winnipeg, the amount being afterwards deducted from the men's wages. As the cost of board and lodging is calculated at 18s. per week, a good opportunity is offered to the industrious and frugal.

The demand for agricultural labourers in New South Wales is as keen as it is in Canada, and steps have been taken to encourage emigration to that rising and promising colony. Any applicant who is approved by the Agent-General in London will receive a grant of £6, which is equal to saying that half of his passage money to Sydney will be paid. Thus the overplus of our population have another excellent opening, and none will be more welcome than those who happen to own large families. The labourer who is burdened by his children, and has only a very small wage in this country, cannot possibly do better than make a fresh start in this wider world, where boundless possibilities are opened on every side to him. In New South Wales there is a population of only 4,000,000 to 3,000,000 square miles, so that there is plenty of room for expansion, and one of the reasons for trying to induce English labourers to go out is that, according to the last census returns, the population increases but slowly. Obviously those who seize opportunity by the forelock and go while this state of things continues to prevail will have far better chances than those who delay until the best places are filled up.

The utmost sympathy will be felt with Lord Grey, the Governor-General of Canada, on the occasion of the sad death of his daughter, Lady Victoria Grenfell. The occurrence has led to such a warm-hearted expression of condolence on the part of the Canadians that it must be as comforting as anything could be under the circumstances. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, in moving the adjournment of Parliament, after describing the intimate and affectionate relations that existed between the Canadians and the Governors-General, went on to say that this was truer of the present Governor than of any of his predecessors, as Lord Grey had entered more completely into the life of the Canadian people, although he had only been there about two years. Much sorrow will be felt in the North of England at the news of the death of Lady Victoria Grenfell, who had endeared herself both to rich and poor.

What becomes of the Senior Wrangler is a question that has often been asked in the past, but will not be so in the future, as this distinction has at length been abolished at Cambridge.

It has lasted 150 years, and in its day no doubt provided a certain stimulus to the study of mathematics; but that day has long gone past. Not only in the case of the Wranglerships, but in that of many other competitive examinations at the present time, it has become no longer a question of superior knowledge, but of superior quickness and energy. The competitors are trained as hard intellectually as if they were race-horses on the turf or oarsmen on the river, and when the day comes it is merely a trial as to which of them is able to answer the maximum number of questions. All this is antipathetic to our present theories of education, and the abolition need cause no regret anywhere. It is, of course, very difficult to adjust University training with any exactitude to the needs of life. Many of those who have not been specially distinguished in any particular branch of study, but have by processes peculiar to themselves imbibed information on a vast number of topics and thoroughly digested it, have in the end had more distinguished careers than those who figure most prominently on the University lists. This ought not to be the case. Those who guide the educational system at our Universities ought to study the best and most practical means of reaching efficiency in life, not merely accomplishment in one branch of human knowledge.

MY MOTHER'S GRAVE.

The solemn yew trees stand around
This place of immemorial tears;
And many a long-forgotten mound
Gives solitude a sadder sound
Than this lone twilight wears.

Here Sorrow broodeth like a dove,
Nor ever spreads her folded wings;
And here I come to stand above
A face of unforgotten love,
And dear familiar things.

My Mother's grave—I cannot speak
These words save to my heart alone;
They bring the warm tears to my cheek,
They touch a string too thin and weak
For aught but Sorrow's tone.

Yet, ah, I love to think how blest
Her quiet slumber here must be—
The dreams soft-folded on her breast—
Who knew such anguish and unrest,
Yet had but smiles for me.

Who gave to woman's name a grace
Of purity, and love, and trust.
Ah, me, I take a purer face
From this old, still, unhappy place
Of unremembered dust.

Here new and holy thoughts have birth;
I feel, while recollection weeps,
Whate'er I have of manhood's worth
Springs from this plot of quiet earth,
Where my Belovèd sleeps.

R. G. T. COVENTRY.

In many ways Mr. John Burns, as the head of the Local Government Board, is entitled to respect and admiration, but we trust that there is no truth in the rumour that he wishes to curtail the research work of the department over which he presides. This is probably the most fruitful work done by the Local Government Board, and it would be a thousand pities to discourage it. Doing so would also cast a great deal of discredit upon Mr. John Burns and the class to which he belongs. It would be said at once that the working-man member lacks education enough to appreciate the value of scientific research. Of course this would not be true of Mr. John Burns, who, whatever his schooling may have been, is now a man of wide and judicious reading. But were he to operate in any way against the scientific side of his Department, he would give reasonable ground for the criticism that Labour is not on the side of true progress.

The famine in Russia has reached such serious proportions that an appeal for funds in aid of its afflicted people has been made in England and America. The causes of these famines, which have become more or less regular, are many. The chief cause is undoubtedly the primitive method of agriculture employed, and to this must be added the withdrawal during the war of a large proportion of the labour available, droughts, floods and the ravages of disease in the grain. If grain is scarce, meat must be more so. The traveller in Russia will see everywhere a state of affairs which denotes improvidence; game laws are not enforced, so that bird, beast and fish are killed in and out of season. The fish in particular are not spared, as may be seen almost any day by the condition of the fish offered for sale in the markets, and there must be a limit in time even to the great store of fish contained in "Little Mother Volga."

Even the poor short-legged fox of the country is shot at sight, not for food, it is true, but to gratify the sportsman, who pleads in defence that the animal is no good for hunting.

M. Cambon, the French Ambassador here, took occasion the other day when distributing some school prizes to sing the praises of those who are engaged in teaching Englishmen the French language. No better agency for cultivating the *entente cordiale* is conceivable than that of a common language. If the truth were known, our ignorance of one another's speech is colossal. Some of the most eminent French novelists, M. Guy de Maupassant, for example, scarcely knew a word of English, and the proportion of Englishmen who can really converse in French is very small indeed. Neither French nor English are such excellent linguists as the Germans. We have met young German boys who had received no teaching other than that given in class at their seminaries who could nevertheless speak English to an Englishman intelligently and grammatically. We are apt to look upon the acquisition of a modern language as a very light accomplishment, but it is also a most useful one, and the opinion of M. Paul Cambon deserves to be heartily endorsed.

The mysterious disease which has been playing havoc among the wood-pigeons in parts of Hampshire, Sussex and Norfolk has, in certain quarters, caused some alarm lest it should prove communicable to man or domesticated animals. Birds which have died from this disease this year do not appear to have been examined by a pathologist; but from all accounts it would seem that the epidemic is one of pigeon diphtheria, due to the toxic secretions of the bacillus diphtheriae columbarum, a bacillus which differs from that which causes fowl diphtheria or that in the human subject. So far as can be made out it seems to be fatal to pigeons, sparrows and rabbits, but does not affect fowls, guinea-pigs or dogs. While the human diphtheria is communicable to many birds and domesticated animals, neither fowl nor pigeon diphtheria appears conversely to be communicable to man. But this is not the case where cows are concerned.

The origin of pigeon diphtheria deserves further investigation, for this disease in the human subject seems to germinate only when the bacteria find an entrance to the mucus membrane of the fauces through an abrasion on its surface. If this be true in the case of the bacillus which attacks the pigeon, it is possible that the coincidence of its sporadic appearance with an abundant yield of acorns may lead to an interesting discovery. To be brief, and this is purely a guess, the diphtheria bacillus, like that of tetanus, may be a soil bacillus, and may make its way into the system through slight abrasions of the throat caused by the attempt to swallow large acorns besmeared with soil containing sharp-edged grit. That the acorns are in themselves innocuous is plain from the fact that they are greedily eaten by pheasants and pigs without harmful results. That pheasants appear but seldom to be similarly infected would be explained by the fact that from their larger size even the biggest acorns would be easily swallowed without causing injury to the throat.

A woman's colony is being founded in Texas by Miss Mary Haydon, a Chicago novelist. Five thousand acres are being taken up by this lady, who will have for her associates none but unmarried ladies. They will go in for "light farming" only, whatever they mean by that. Miss Haydon states that, if necessary, she may take married women, whose husbands may accompany them, but no man is to have any voice in the management of the colony. Each "colonist" must provide a certain amount of capital, but "useful" women will be allowed to join in small numbers without this qualification.

The more picturesque the country the more inevitable it appears to be that its beauty must be menaced, and in most instances eventually much impaired, by the erection of a hideous line of telephone posts with their relentless reminder that we live in an age in which the beautiful has constantly to be sacrificed to the useful. It has been thus with Ashdown Forest, Epping Forest and certain portions of the New Forest district, and now there is a new proposal to destroy much of the charm of one of the most attractive roads in the latter region by a like erection of poles. This is the road from Woolston to Netley, with its delightful views of the old castle and so on. It is a road which cannot fail to remain beautiful in spite of the ugly poles, but it will be with a picturesqueness marred by their presence, unless the resistance to their erection has sufficient backing behind it to be successful. The worst of it is that the telephone posts are able to make out a strong case for themselves on the utilitarian side, and we cannot condemn our telephone wires, in the present state of science, to a subterranean mode of life, as we can our telegraph wires, because of the disturbance to accurate transmission of the message which is caused, in the case of the telephone, if its wires be run under ground.

A short time ago, in this paper, there was a hint given about strewing the back eddies of rivers with corn, for the purpose of attracting wildfowl; but this plan has the disadvantage that equally attaches to scattering such food on the banks, namely, that it is sure to be eaten by the wrong birds—pigeons, for instance, or even, ashore, by animals—rats or rabbits. A food that is in constant use on one estate in Dorsetshire is that supplied by the acorn crop. Several loads are collected, thoroughly seasoned and then dropped into shallow bays and back eddies along the river. Unlike corn, acorns sink at once, and therefore the water should not be more than a few inches, say eight, deep. Here the duck will collect, and spend hours diving for these much-prized delicacies, and will return again and again to where this under-water table is spread for them which they alone can get at.

COLDSHIELDS LOCH.

(ON THE ABBOTSFORD ESTATE. A FAVOURITE HAUNT OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT.)

A sombre and a glowering sky
With hopeful streaks,
Like anger brooding dubiously
On gentle cheeks.
A hillside clad in various leaf,
Now dark, now bright,
Bracken all hues—brown ore, pale sheaf,
Hearth flame at night.
An upland loch that breezes fret
With ripple and stir,
Borne southward from a margin set
With glooming fir.
Slow-sailing water-fowl, rich green
Of field and reed,
Quiet and far peaks; beneath, unseen,
The curves of Tweed.

ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS FOX.

In the *Federal Magazine*, which is described as a "monthly record of the League of the Empire," Lieutenant-Colonel G. T. Plunkett makes a suggestion that we cannot help thinking mischievous. Its object is to encourage the collection in schools of "the flowers, the leaves, the butterflies, the beetles, or other objects to be found in the neighbourhood." If this advice were acted upon the result would be to hasten the destruction of many of those beautiful objects of Nature which are so lovely when seen in their wild condition. And the kind of collection that Colonel Plunkett recommends is one that is endless in its capacity. He says, "What a strong bond of union will be established between two young collectors who exchange the leaves, the flowers, the butterflies, or photographs of scenery of the countries, perhaps widely separated, in which they live!" Among the other objects of collection referred to no doubt birds are included. Colonel Plunkett's object is doubtless good and disinterested. It is to bring the inhabitants of different parts of the British dominions into communication with one another, but we hope his ingenuity will find some more laudable means than that of robbing woodland, field and hedgerow of their greatest attractions.

Our Northern contemporary the *Scotsman* has been making enquiry about the registers kept at Gretna Green, and has found that they are distributed over many parts of the country. Some are in the hands of a firm of Carlisle solicitors, others are possessed by private individuals of the same town. A few, if we mistake not, were published in the *Strand Magazine*, found some at Newcastle and some at Annan; but the chief point is that no one who has had the luck, good or bad, to have near or distant ancestors married at Gretna could easily obtain these registers, and what applies to them applies equally to the records kept at the various tolls and bridges on the Border where weddings were celebrated in a similar fashion. Some were the resort of runaway couples, others were patronised by natives chiefly on account of their cheapness; but of one and all it is to be feared that the majority of the records are completely lost.

The sub-committee which was appointed by the Advisory Committee of the cricketing counties for the special purpose of considering and amending the classification of counties and the principle of promotion from one class into another, has made a recommendation which is interesting and carries some novel ideas with it. The resolution runs "that any county which can obtain six home and home matches with first-class counties shall rank as a first-class county." This has, of course, to pass both the General Advisory Committee and also the General Committee of the Marylebone Club before it becomes part of cricket law, but in the meantime it may be noted that it introduces a curious principle. The first-class counties are left to themselves, to ensure the exclusion from their number of unworthy claimants,

and thus the invidious necessity of selection is removed from the shoulders of a committee. The idea is certainly ingenious. Whether it will work may be open to question. It will, at least, be interesting to see how it is received by the superior committees. It is obvious that such a rule might operate with undue severity on a county worthy of first-class rank which did not succeed in getting its necessary six matches arranged.

The Tay is upholding the first part, at all events, of the new reputation which it made for itself last year as a spring river. It is to be hoped that it will do better than last year in

the autumn. As a rule, the Tay is renowned as a fine autumn river, particularly in the last week of the season for rod-fishing. Last year it fished much better than usual in the spring, while the autumn sport was comparatively poor. This year its history is repeating itself, so far as the spring sport goes, a good many fish being caught, and, notably two very fine ones which lady anglers have brought to the gaff. It will be curious if it turns out that the Tay is becoming permanently what we call a spring river, instead of an autumn one, and that the fish are changing their habit in it and beginning to run up early in the year instead of late.

VILLAGE LIFE IN FRANCE.

THE French peasant and his household have always had a picturesque flavour of their own, except in the black period before the Revolution. Happily one can know just how they spoke and felt and looked by visiting the inhabitants of Quebec. Jacques Bonhomme has there become Johnny Crapaud, a familiar generic title made popular by that great writer of ballads, Mr. Drummond. In the snug, dainty villages dotted at wide intervals along the upper reaches of the Montmorency, by the shores of a stream plentiful with trout, and at the edges of woods still roamed by bear and caribou, the old French peasant, out of reach of the agents of change, has kept the simple language and the merry heart that his race bequeathed to him. His priest—a merry person, too—teaches him that *dieu bénit les grandes familles*. About the cottage doors, grubbing in the gardens, throwing pebbles in the stream, tending the cattle, are such a host of children as should ensure the maximum of the benediction. Their merriment somewhat resembles their cattle. These poor beast are housed close, and often reduced to a miserable state of semi-inanition during the hard winters. They emerge caked with mud, and showing bones like the relic ends of a broken tree branch. But under spring and the *grata vice veris et Favoni* they fatten speedily, and gambol with recovered levity. It is so with the peasants. As the snows begin to swell the streams their

potted gaiety is turned out as perpetual feast through the open months. They long to gossip with you, they are unwilling to let you go, they envy the priest because he makes you go and drink his strange glaucous wine from narrow glasses in his proper parlour; and such glasses as were so used three years ago in the woodland villages of Quebec were filled for me not long since in a doctor's cottage in a remote village in Aisne. In more essential things, too, the French peasant to-day seems to be relapsing — progressing would be a truer word—into the happy natural state that has been preserved with strange fidelity in French Canada.

The whole world was astounded at the rapidity with which France paid off the great indemnity after 1871, and the credit was generally given to the thrifty ways and great energy of the French peasant. But perhaps the recovery of gaiety after the Revolution and the Napoleonic wars was more remarkable. The peasant seemed to have shown thrift in his stock of enjoyment. When the winter of his discontent was over, his social qualities, so far from showing the effects of inanition, burst out into bloom of gayer laughter and more solid content than the rest of the world. There is a delightful picture of a scene, still common enough, in that long-since-forgotten book, Lady Morgan's "France," a shallow but delightful work. She had an eye and she had sympathy, and she wrote at a most critical date in the peasant's



M. Emil Frechon.

LIVING POEMS.

Copyright

life—the year after Waterloo. Of one of many such visits she writes: "We found the interior of the cottage infinitely superior to its external appearance; a clean and lofty bed occupied a little alcove in the outside room; some articles of old china ornamented one shelf, and a few books another; while the *pot au feu* was bubbling over a clear fire under the special superintendence of an aged dame, who received us very good-humouredly. To our question whether we could get any fruit to purchase, she replied: 'Mais très volontiers—tenez'; and she hobbled to a little door which opened into a very small yard, where a cow, a mule and a pig were lying amicably together under a sort of shed on which some flax lay drying in the sun . . . 'Tenez, monsieur, et madame! You will have the goodness to cross that little *bassecour*, you will then find yourselves in the *verger*, where my son-in-law and my daughter will have the honour to receive your commands; they are both at work there.' We found the daughter (a middle-aged woman) at her distaff, under a tree laden with greengages, of which she gave us the plunder for the sum of six *sous* (threepence), exhorting us to fill our handkerchiefs with repeated 'Prenez-en donc, ne vous gênez pas!'

We observed that the little domain of which she was mistress was composed of a *potagerie*, a vineyard and a quantity

peasants are like them in this, and where they chiefly excel our peasants is in the care of animals rather than crops. You may demand hospitality from any little inn and many cottages among the villages of the Ardennes, and it is ten to one that you will be given a vast omelette, which will be cooked on the stove—good economical firing—before your eyes. A diary before me recalls a lunch for two in such a village. Six eggs went to the making of the omelette; to this were added bread and butter, not spared in quantity, and the beer of the country. For this hearty meal one franc was given, and the payment was thought excessive. Neither the eggs nor the butter could be given in an English village to-day. Not so long ago milk was drunk in large quantities in the villages; now it is one of the smallest items in the daily food. Yet in France and Belgium you may go far without seeing the cows. Much as in Lady Morgan's picture, the animals are secreted in unsuspected and narrow sheds at the backs of premises. The villages are full of cattle so housed; and it is a marvel how they are fed. The amount of bought food cannot be great, and the labour of children who may frequently be seen cutting grass of any quality wherever they can get it would not seem to amount to much. Hens, no doubt, which are visible enough everywhere, live as best they may, but



M. Emil Frechon.

THE DRESS OF THE COUNTRY.

Copyright.

of fruit trees and flowers. It was a delicious spot, and placed in a most delicious situation. We asked her by what tenure her husband held it. She replied with vivacity, 'Mais c'est à nous; c'est un petit propriétaire; tenez, voici mon mari il vous racontera tout ça.'

Perhaps in the last boast lies one reason why the French peasant has altered less than the English. This description, from the idiom to the trappings, is as true of a thousand little holdings to-day as it was of one in the early part of last century. Somehow or other peasant proprietors all the world over have a curious resemblance. They run to type. A common attribute of cheerful pride marks them whether their little field is among the snows of Montmorency, the banks of the Nile, or the meadows about the brooks that run down into the Seine. They are subdued, perhaps, to that they work in, as one wrote: "Le peuple s'est éclairé sur les principes de l'agriculture, le goût de la campagne s'est ranimé; et l'activité de l'esprit s'est portée vers les améliorations agricoles." Whether they are always great agriculturists may be doubted. They work hard and they are masters of economy. The Belgian

they bring many eggs to the pot, if they do not quite enable the peasant to reach the ideal expressed by Henry IV. in the most popular sentiment in French history: "Je veux que le temps viendra quand tout paysan mettra un poulet dans le pot, les dimanches."

It were a pretty subject of enquiry, how much the paved street has added to the social gaiety of French villages. The huge stones are always dry—ducks' backs to the rain—which keeps them clear of mud. Our village streets are too often pathless and the road is seldom what it should be. Little gossiping trips require pattens or their equivalent, while the smooth stones tempt even slippered old women—and old women are often the life of a village—to make their little visits along the gathered cottages. Thanks partly to the hens, pigs and cows, and the fact of possession, there is more to talk about as well as a more tempting road to places of intercourse. The women work so much with the men that the men and women are easier fellows, better met with each other than with us. The women work harder and the families are not always well off, though often enough they have heirlooms—furniture and linen—that would



M. Emil Frechon.

"ONCE UPON A TIME . . ."

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M. Emil Frechon.

A MIDDAY REST.

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make any householder proud. But they are rich enough and leisurely enough to knock sparks from one another's wits. You may meet little sallies of a quite literary character. We know, for example, of one boy in a village about 100 miles south of Paris, who could, and would, string rhymes with a master's ease,

and now and again with a Parisian's point in them. In these directions, as in the sterner and stricter ways of agriculture, it is quite true to-day that "Le goût de la campagne s'est ranimé." M. Meline, like M. Turgot before him, has fostered character as well as skill in intensive cultivation.

W. BEACH THOMAS.

IN THE GARDEN.

THE PURPLE BEECH.

PROBABLY no tree has a more striking effect in the landscape than the purple-leaved Beech, especially when it is used in moderation and mixed with trees having leaves of the ordinary green colouring. As a specimen of 40ft. and upwards in height it is unsurpassed, the growth being dense, symmetrical and not formal, the trunk stout and well-balanced. It is a mistake, however, to plant this tree too freely, green being Nature's predominant colour, and an excess of any other colour tends to take away that restful feeling which should predominate when looking at a well-arranged landscape. A variation of colour, whether of gold, silver, or purple is necessary practically everywhere to relieve the sombre green of many trees, especially of some of the conifers; but the great point is not to have an excess of any colour and so defeat the very object for which plants with coloured foliage should be used. There are several forms of Copper or Purple Beeches, varying in the intensity of their colouring and their rate of growth. The following can be recommended:

The Copper Beech (*Fagus sylvatica* var. *cuprea*).—This is not at all common, the specimens that are often called by this name being forms of the Purple Beech. The true Copper Beech has moderate-sized leaves of a bright coppery red hue, and a stout, rather spreading habit.

The Purple Beech (*F. s.* var. *purpurea*).—An old form with deep purple-red foliage, the under sides of the leaves being more red than the upper surfaces. It is a stout, fairly fast-growing tree, and soon attains a good size. There are several forms, viz., var. *purpurea major*, with larger leaves and a coarser habit; var. *purpurea nova*, with rather deeper-coloured leaves; var. *purpurea pendula*, a weeping form of rather slow growth; and var. "Swat Magret," with large, bold leaves of a very dark, almost black, colour. Besides these there are many seedling forms to be met with, which have a variety of colour, though none is sufficiently distinct to be worthy of a name. It is, however, very unsatisfactory raising Purple Beeches from seed, as not more than about 10 per cent. are worthy of consideration, the majority either coming green, or a dull colour between green and purple. The usual method of propagation is by grafting on stocks of the common Beech in March or April, the actual time depending on the season, but this should be done just before growth begins. The young plants require staking for the first year or two, so that they can be tied up to form a straight stem, as if left alone they are apt to get bent or twisted by their own weight.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CLIMBING PLANTS.

While the planting season is with us it may be useful to direct attention to a few of the most beautiful climbers, which, rightly used, add much to the gaiety of the garden. Taking the kinds alphabetically, the first to think of is the

Ampelopsis, better known as the Virginian Creeper, and now included in the Vine family. The most useful for covering a wall is not that known generally as *A. Veitchii*, but *muralis*, which clings closely without the necessity of nails and shreds. It has a delicious spring beauty when the leaves unfold, and in autumn the colour is brilliant crimson, a flood of rich hues when the trees in the garden are changing too. One rarely sees the muralis form, notwithstanding its usefulness and beauty.

Azara microphylla.—This has no popular name, as far as we are aware, and is not very hardy, but in the Southern Counties it should certainly have a place for the sake of its wiry, glossy green foliage. A wall covered with the Azara grows in interest and beauty, and it is a mistake this shrub is not more planted.

Chimonanthus fragrans, or *Winter Sweet*.—This is a sweet-smelling shrub in flower now and happily named Winter Sweet, its soft yellow blooms scenting the air for many yards round. It is not exactly a climbing plant, rather a shrub for a sunny wall, to which many visits will be paid in the winter season for the sake of the blooms. Few shrubs need more careful pruning. The way to do this is to cut back the shoots to within 4in. of the main stems, as on the young growth the flowers appear. There is considerable difference in the flowers. Some varieties are deeper in colour and others more fragrant, one having been given a distinct name, viz., *grandiflorus*, which, as the name suggests, bears larger blooms.

The Clematises.—These form one of the most important families of climbing plants, and comprise not only species of great ornamental value, but a host of beautiful varieties. The most popular of all is undoubtedly *C. Jackmani*, which is familiar in many gardens, large and small, being one of the first climbers to be selected. There is a dashing beauty in its large purple flowers, which continue long in beauty, and are carried on long twining stems. It is rather to the rarer kinds we would direct attention, these having a rich and unusual beauty. One is flowering at this season—*C. calycina*, distinguished by its greenish yellow bell-shaped flowers, quiet in colour, but pleasing to look at. It is not very hardy, and therefore only

suitable for the Southern Counties of England and Ireland. *C. coccinea*, which has reddish flowers, never seems a success—at least, we have rarely seen a very flourishing plant of it—and on this account should be omitted from the first list. *C. davidiana*, blue; the lovely white-flowered *C. montana*; *C. paniculata*, white and very fragrant; *C. recta*, white; the fast-growing *C. Flammula*, bowered over with white sweet-smelling flowers in late summer; and *C. Viticella* are all worthy of a place in the garden.

The Ivies.—These were described recently.

Jasmines.—A golden gleam of colour comes from *Jasminum nudiflorum*, as the winter-flowering Jasmine is named, and we can hardly have too much of this beautiful climber. It seems to flourish everywhere, even in the town garden, and the bright green shoots intensify the colouring of the sweet-scented petals. We use it for table decoration, the flowers lasting long in beauty, and the buds open perfectly. The white Jasmine is quite familiar.

Winter-flowering Honeysuckles.—A whiff of fragrance comes from a Honeysuckle against the house of the writer, and it is not generally known that a winter-flowering kind exists. Its name is *Lonicera fragrantissima*, and the pale yellow flowers are deliciously sweet. Another Honeysuckle that blooms in winter is *L. Standishi*. The late Dutch variety is one of the most popular, but the winter kinds should not be forgotten.

Passion-flowers.—These are unsatisfactory climbers, for the reason that they have an unfortunate disposition to die off—at least, this is our experience—and they are certainly tender. The much-praised Constance Elliott variety has not for us the same charm as the blue Passion-flower, which is a gem in colouring and in form.

The Polygonum.—As several notes have been written on the merits of the beautiful *Polygonum baldschuanicum*, further reference to it is unnecessary.

Solanum jasminoides.—This was referred to recently, also the *Ficaria verna* (*Tropæolum s. eciosum*), which is a tantalising plant to grow, but when it does succeed rejoices the gardener's heart.

The Vines.—The ordinary Sweet-water Vine is one of the prettiest in leaf, and the fruit is sweet and refreshing. Against the pergola, however, we should have *Vitis Thunbergi*, for the sake not only of the bold and handsome foliage, but for its ruddy colouring in autumn. Another favourite is *V. Labrusca*. Vines should be planted in late April, not at this season.

The Wistaria is not a climber in the strict sense of the word, but the trails of lavender flowers are always beautiful, whether seen against the house or hanging from the pergola. The *Wistaria* grown so much in Japan is not the kind we are familiar with here, but the long-racemed *W. multijuga*, which does not bloom so freely in this country.

A BEAUTIFUL PRIVET (LIGUSTRUM QUIHOU).

When well grown, several of the Privets form really ornamental flowering shrubs which are worthy of inclusion in the most select collections. Of this number *L. Quihoui* is one of the most useful, for in addition to its freedom of flowering, it blooms during the latter half of August and September. It is a Chinese shrub, and though introduced many years ago, is still uncommon. When mature it forms a large dense bush 6ft. to 8ft. high, and as much across. The branches are thin, stiff and wiry, forming a very thick mass. The leaves are small and deciduous, the flowers white and borne in large panicles from 6in. to 8in. long from the points of the shoots. Like other Privets, it thrives in ordinary garden soil and is increased by means of cuttings.

PETERHOUSE LIBRARY, CAMBRIDGE.

IN a previous article, describing the library of Merton College, Oxford, we told how Walter de Merton, a man of affairs as well as an ecclesiastic, originated what we call the collegiate system in 1264. His idea found favour with his contemporaries, and in less than twenty years it was imitated at the sister University. In 1280 Hugh de Balsham, Bishop of Ely, obtained licence to introduce into the Hospital of St. John in the Jewry at Cambridge—a charitable institution managed by monks of the Augustinian Order—certain “studious

scholars who should in everything live together as students in the University of Cambridge according to the rule of the scholars at Oxford who are called of Merton.” The idea was excellent, and in strict conformity with the rule of Saint Benedict, to whose Order the bishop belonged; but the manner of carrying it out was unfortunate. The brethren and the scholars disagreed; and their quarrels presently reached so acute a stage that they combined in an appeal to the bishop to separate them. He consented, and by an instrument dated March 31st, 1284,



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THE LIBRARY, LOOKING EAST.

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removed the scholars to a site which seems to have been chosen because it was so distant from the scene of quarrel that neither they nor the brethren were likely even to see each other in the future. He bought two dwelling-houses (*hospitia*), near the churchyard of St. Peter, beyond Trumpington Gates—a small Norman church on the high road leading southward from Cambridge, just outside the limits of the town, as defined by the King's Ditch with which Henry III. intended to protect it. The house was to be called the House of St. Peter, or briefly, Peterhouse. The selection of St. Peter as patron was probably suggested in part by the neighbouring church, in part by the bishop's cathedral, which is under the invocation of St. Peter conjointly with St. Etheldreda.

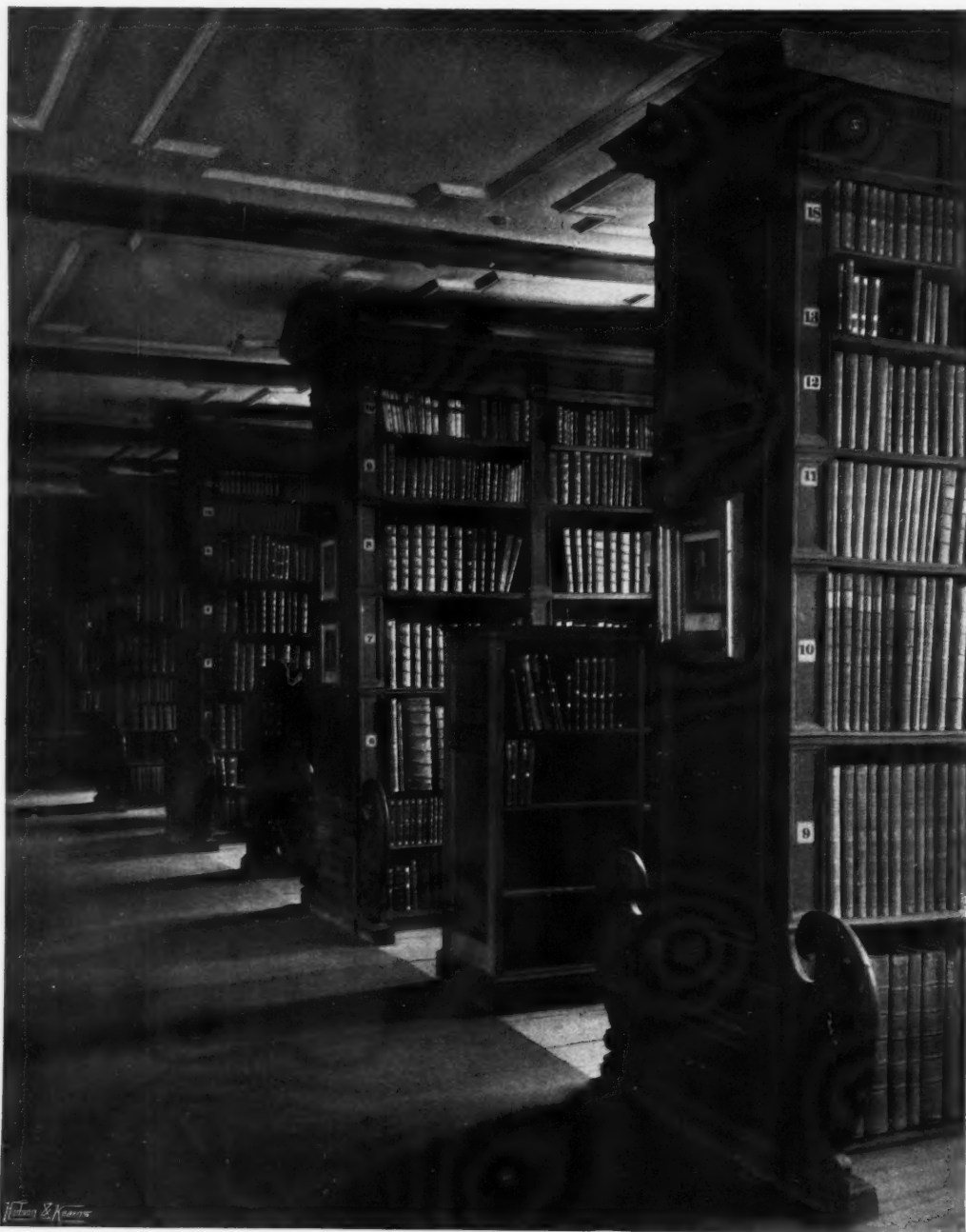
These houses—or hostels, as they are usually called—were amply sufficient for the community, which consisted at first of no more than fourteen scholars and a master, with (probably) two or three servants, for, so late as 1626, the "great hostel" contained ten chambers, and the "little hostel" seven; and in estimating the capacity of ancient buildings, we must be careful to discard all modern notions of sanitation. The development of this college, the steps of which can be traced more easily than those of any other with which I am acquainted, shows the very gradual way in which colleges came into being. No one knew whether such establishments would be a success or a failure; still less what buildings would be most suitable for them. Accordingly, the inmates for the first college at Cambridge were packed into two dwelling-houses; they said their prayers in the adjoining church; they took their meals (at any rate, at first) in some room in one or other of the hostels; and their books were kept in a chest, securely bound with iron, as was the fashion of those

times, and fastened by as many locks as there were officials to take charge of it.

The permanent buildings arose very gradually. The hall, as was natural, was the first built, about 1236, with a legacy of 300 marks bequeathed by the founder; and it is, in the main, the building still in use. It may be assumed that a buttery and a kitchen were built at the same time, or shortly afterwards; but the west side of the quadrangle was not begun till 1424—138 years after the founder's death—and the north side was not finished till 1438. The parlour—as the combination room was called in this college, over which was the master's lodging—may be dated 1460. This last addition completed three sides out of the four which it was intended one day to build; but, as events turned out, the fourth side was never built according to the original design, but rejected in favour of a new and original plan. For at least 150 years, however, the college contented itself with a single small quadrangle, entered on the north from the churchyard of St. Mary the Less, which represents the more ancient church of St. Peter. This quadrangle was closed on the east side by a wall, between which and Trumpington Street was a space about 90 ft. wide, in which stood the original hostels.

This state of things came to an end at the close of the mastership of Dr. Perne (1554-89), who had contrived, by judicious changes of opinion, to retain that position during the troublous times of Edward VI., Mary and Elizabeth, and even to obtain preferment. But he must have been something far better than a mere time-server, though the wits of the University coined a new Latin verb *pernare*, to change one's opinion; and vowed that the letters A. P. P. on the college weathercock would stand equally well for Andrew Perne Papist, or for Andrew Perne Protestant. He was a cultivated man of letters, and an ardent book-collector. His own "studdie or librarie" was "supposed to be the worthiest in all England," and when he died in 1589 he bequeathed to his college not only a number of his books, but as much money as should be required to build a library 60 ft. long in continuation street-wards of the south range of the college. This was accordingly done, between 1590 and 1593; and soon afterwards the range was further prolonged to the street, where it terminates in a picturesque gable containing an oriel window of excellent design. The date inscribed upon it, 1633, marks the conclusion of the external part of the work. A range of chambers, which may be dated 1632, formed a pendant to it on the north.

Up to this time the society had been content with the parish church as their chapel, but during the mastership of Dr. Matthew Wren (1626-34), this inconvenient arrangement was put an end to by the erection of a separate chapel. The name of the architect has not been preserved, but either he or Wren conceived the bold innovation of a building which should stand east and west in the middle of the entrance court, and be connected with the ranges north and south of it by lateral cloisters, having a single room or passage over them. The result is as successful as it is original. This important addition to the college buildings put the finishing touch to the plan which is so much admired, namely, an entrance court open to the street, through which a visitor passes to the principal quadrangle and thence to the rooms and gardens beyond it. Had the intentions of the original builders been respected we should have had a valuable series of dated architectural examples bearing witness to



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RANGE OF BOOKCASES ON SOUTH SIDE.

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the zeal of those who ruled the college at successive periods. But alas! in 1730, Mr. Burrough, of Gonville and Caius College, an architect who worked in the classical style then in fashion, was allowed to pull down the range of chambers which then bounded the entrance court on the north, and to replace it by the building which still exists. This was part of an ambitious design which would have involved the addition of a storey to each of the cloisters and the destruction of Perne's library to make way for a building on the south to correspond exactly with its fellow on the north. Want of funds put a stop to this vandalism; but before long Burrough persuaded the society to let him ashlar the principal quadrangle. The result was the obliteration, with fatal success, of all that the builders of the fifteenth century had erected.

We will now consider the libraries which the college successively possessed, and their fittings. As the fellows or scholars (the terms being used indifferently to designate the same persons) were intended to be students, they were, from the first, provided with books—which the earliest statutes, dated 1344, class with charters and muniments, and direct that they

are to be placed in one or more common chests, each having two locks, one key of which shall for the greater security be deposited with the Master, the other with the Senior Dean, who shall cause the books to be distributed to the scholars in such manner as shall appear to them expedient; and, further, they shall, if they think proper, make each scholar take an oath that he will not alienate any book so borrowed, but will take all possible care of it, and restore it to the Master and Dean at the appointed time.

After some years these precious MSS., with others added to them, were placed in a room, which is afterwards referred to as "the old library," and a catalogue, made in 1418, shows that the collection then consisted of 380 volumes, and that it was divided into books for the use of the fellows (*libri distribuendi*), and books chained in the library (*libri catenati in libraria*); in other words, into a lending library, and a library of reference. As the subjects of the books are given, it is easy to show (1) what the studies of the society were at that time; (2) how many books each library possessed in each subject.

	Chained.	Distributed.		Chained.	Distributed.
Theology ...	61	63	Rhetoric ...	1	—
*Natural Philosophy ...	26	19	*Logic ...	5	15
*Metaphysics ...	3	—	*Grammar ...	6	—
*Moral Philosophy ...	5	—	Poetry ...	4	13
*Astronomy ...	13	—	Chronicles ...	4	—
Alchemy ...	1	—	Medicine ...	15	3
*Arithmetic ...	1	—	Civil Law ...	9	20
*Music ...	1	—	Canon Law ...	18	19
*Geometry ...	1	—			
				174	152

These figures, added together, give a total of 326, the difference, 54, being made up by the gifts of special donors, the subjects of which are not recorded. It was prescribed by the statutes, dated 1344, that the scholars were to study arts, Aristotelian philosophy, or theology. Two might study civil or canon law; one might study medicine. The books required for the course of arts are distinguished by an asterisk in the above list. It will be seen that theology, as might be expected, is most largely represented (124); law comes next (66). After these we have Aristotelian philosophy (53), grammar and poetry (23), logic (20), medicine (18),



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A SINGLE BAY.

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astronomy (13), while arithmetic, music, and geometry are represented by only a single volume apiece; but, even with these omissions, the collection must certainly be regarded as more than respectable. The position of the room which contained them is not known.

When the west range was built the greater part of the first floor was allotted to a library, the extent of which can be traced with tolerable accuracy, as the stone staircase which led up to it still exists, with some of the traces of the roof. It was about 48ft. long and 19ft. broad, and probably contained six desks and two half-desks on each side, to which the books were attached by chains. In 1593-94, when the new library, due to the munificence of Dr. Perne, was ready, the books were moved in, and the chains were taken off; but probably, for reasons of economy, the old cases were still used, for it is not till 1633-34 that a carpenter named Ashley is paid for new "seats" (as bookcases were called in those days), and not till 1641-42 and following years that he supplies others. These cases, twelve in number, with four half-cases set against the east and west walls, are still in use. If Ashley designed as well as executed them, he deserves a niche in the temple of fame, for they are extremely beautiful examples, and were evidently much admired at the time, for they were copied in other libraries.

They stand at right angles to the walls between the windows (the shelves under which are modern, as are the dwarf cases between each pair of the original cases). Originally they were just 8ft. high, but have been heightened to accommodate more books, a proceeding which has necessitated the removal of several of the curved pediments with which their ends were decorated. The convenience of readers was considered by a peculiar contrivance, which I have not observed in any other library. A

seat was provided, 12in. wide, and 23in. high, extending along the side of each case, and returned along the wall between it and the case next to it. The ends of this seat are concealed by boldly carved wings. This arrangement may still be seen in the two compartments at the west end of the room, one on each side of the door of entrance; and in the two on the south side, in each of which there is a fireplace.

Our illustrations show the staircase leading up to the library door; the interior of the room, with the eastern oriel; one of the compartments at the west end, with the cabinet to hold MSS. and rare books, and the reader's seat; a second view of the same compartment, with the addition of the bookcase, which forms one side of it; and a single compartment in the library, to show the full design of the cases.

JOHN WILLIS CLARK.

A YEOMAN OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

EVEN nowadays, in spite of the ease with which stock and gear and household goods may be transported from place to place, the old-settled stay-at-homes among us vastly outnumber the immigrant folk from other neighbourhoods. We know of an odd one here or there who has come "out o' the southward parts," and we have even heard vaguely of a settlement of Scottish farmers upon the derelict lands of Essex; but in the main, unless we "go foreign" altogether, as now and then a venturesome younger son will do, we do not wander far from the familiar scenes. It is a little surprising, then, to realise that well on for 300 years ago, in spite of bad roads, risky travelling and primitive methods of transport, a substantial farmer brought up his household belongings great and small all the way out of Essex, "from Brayntry," and took a farm in this Yorkshire Wold country of ours, where he settled down and dwelled and prospered for well-nigh a quarter of a century, and his descendants after him. His, however, was not the common sort of flitting. Henry Best was coming to his own; for his father, a well-to-do scrivener of London, had bought the property, designing it for Paul, the elder son. But of this pair of sons it was the elder who was the prodigal. Paul Best, described as "a Master of Arts that liveth at his own charge in one of the Universities"—Cambridge, to wit—found, like Squire Hamley's dilettante heir, that bullocks were rot in his line; and for a suitable consideration he parted with his patrimony readily enough to his more practical brother.

It is a fair supposition that Henry Best, a Southerner among the Yorkshiremen, found himself somewhat at a disadvantage in his new surroundings; and that, whether he bought or sold, he had to pay his footing by giving the top price and taking the bottom one. It is not likely that there was any more disposition

on his neighbours' part than there is nowadays to make things too easy for a "foreigner"; while, as a ready-money man and a man of theories besides, Mr. Best was probably regarded as a customer with whom profitable bargains might be driven. The positive value which in after life he set upon his farming experience is a fair indication that he had bought that experience at its full price. It must not be assumed, however, that the newcomer was in any sense a simpleton. Intellectually, no doubt, he was more than the equal of his neighbours: he was a scholar—probably a Cambridge man—and certainly a reader. Did he not bring up from Braintree a library of some forty volumes, ranging from "Tullyes Orations" to "Mr. Banister's Chyrurgery," and from "Sir Thomas Elliott's Castle of Health" to "Mr. Fox, his abridgment of the Acktes and monuments of the church," and "Mr. Dikes, his misery of selfe deceaving"? But Best was not a bookworm: he was a practical man. He loved Tusser; but he conned the "Five Hundreth Poyntes of Good Husbandrie" not as poetry, but as a book of instruction, and, to use his own phrase, "remembrances." He was what we call a gentleman farmer, and probably he never so much as set a hand to plough or shepherd's crook himself. His was the thinking part, the planning and supervising; he kept accounts, too, carefully, if somewhat confusedly, according to modern notions, and he was a methodical recorder of observations. It was necessary for him, therefore, to employ a working foreman; and he was always careful to choose a capable and intelligent man, whom he was accustomed to pay at the rate of "five markes per annum and perhaps 2s. or halfe a crowne to a godspenny," provided that in addition to his ordinary qualifications the man was one who could be trusted

to do "markettinge and the like." Is there a suggestion here that the book-learned gentleman from the South Country had found himself a dove among serpents at Malton market? A second man at "50s. or fower marke" per annum, a third at "seaven nobles," a fourth at 35s. or 36s. and two lads at 30s. each, for driving the plough-oxen, completed Mr. Best's establishment out of doors, not to reckon the extra hands, "moor-folkes" whom he hired at harvest-time.

One gathers that even in the seventeenth century there were bad servants; and that good ones were not always easy to come by, even at good wages. "Once," says our writer, "I heard a servant asked what hee could doe, whoe made this answeare:

I can sowe
I can mowe
And I can stacke,
And I can doe
My master too
When my master turnes
his backe!"

Mr. Best's household was almost entirely self-supporting—his own

cattle, sheep and swine supplied meat for the table, and their hides were tanned for leather. The produce of his fields—wheat, barley, rye and pease—was ground at the mill "for the house use"; wheat-meal and massledine (mixed meal) for the master's table, and a "hearty bread," containing a liberal proportion of pease-meal, for the labouring folk. Over and above what the household required, there was corn to send to market; for we read, among others, of one particular instance when



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CUPBOARD FOR MSS. & SEAT FOR READER.

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supplies were profitably disposed of. "On Wensday the 1st of June wee solde twenty quarters of wheate to a baker in Yorke and twenty quarters of massledine; for the Kinge beinge there, the marketts weare very quicke." This was in 1642, when Charles was much in the North. The cloth for the family's clothing—local homespun and Scotch cloth for the most part—was bought at the local markets and fairs; but for finer fabrics they were dependent upon pedlars who travelled inland from the seaport towns bringing foreign materials, such as "flezy holland, sayd to be spunne by the nunnes in the Lowe Countryes," for neckerchiefs and the like. Tailors and cobblers were itinerant folk, who were lodged and boarded while they worked. Cobblers received better wages than tailors, namely, 4d. a day and their "meat," against the tailors' 3d. It appears that the farmfolk wore leather breeches of home manufacture, for there is an entry in Mr. Best's account book of "2 skinnies and thred for the swineherd's breeches." Payment wholly or partially in kind seems to have been very common. The shepherd—an important personage on a farm that was mainly a sheep farm—always had his wages supplemented by certain perquisites of livestock. In payment for something or other, one Christopher Pearson received a pair of Mr. Best's boots, which had become "too strate" for him; but this was late in the yeoman's life, when increasing bulk or the gout or a distaste for the fopperies of earlier days had led him to prefer ease to appearances. In like manner William Huitson is recorded to have brought a quarter of veal worth 8d. in part payment of his rent; but a more notable example is the bargain made with "Matthewe Carter and John Carter his sonne, of Greate Driffeylde, carpenters, to digg upp a walnutt tree of myne, and to sawe it into 2 yndch and a-half planks, and the rest of the small peeces into such peeces as it is fittest for; and to make mee two chayres, one for myselfe and the other a lesser, well turned and wrought, and I am to give them for doing these things above mencioned, workman-like, 10s. in money, a bushell of barley and a pecke of oatemeale, and give them in money 3d. for their godspenny." In some such manner no doubt were made many of those excellent pieces of furniture which our ancestors of the seventeenth century have handed down to us to-day.

Obviously Mr. Best became sooner or later a person of weight and consequence in the neighbourhood. The power of the purse, perhaps, had something to do with this result; but most of all, one imagines, his own ability and skill. He could take the lead in things for the public good. "I made the sheepe dike in the towne beck by Howson lane ende," he writes, "and William Whitehead would not sende any helpe to make it, but gave the constable, Richard Parrat, ill wordes, and called him slave when he wished him to come to helpe; so that he is not to washe any sheepe there." He was a notable farmer. "Good husbandry" was his ideal; and to attain it he spared neither thought nor pains. Was the weather favourable, the master was astir betimes with a plan of action well thought out beforehand, and all the gear overlooked and made ready: "thus doinge you shall neaver bee in dainger of loosing a good opportunity, or seekinge the implements when you should use them"—a maxim that might profitably be applied to other than agricultural operations. If he had to call for extra exertions, he was not behindhand with

extra rewards. He had a careful thought for any of his people engaged on a trying task; and when the sheep-washing was in progress and the men were standing up to their middles in the cold water, he would prepare a special posset of boiled milk and ale, with nutmeg and pepper, made "very hotte" to ward off chills. Yet he had a sound notion of what was due to the master. In bad weather when the harvesting or other field work was brought to a standstill, he would find jobs to occupy his "folkes"

profitably, even though it were only to clean carts and wains. None might come to glean in his fields after harvest who was known to be "able and unwilling to worke"; and the hand of the disciplinarian is plainly visible in that transaction about the sheep-dike. The good yeoman was evidently something of a household physician. There is a curious jumbled list of medicaments and conserves, which he brought with him from Braintree, including "aquavita, long ginger, mace, nutmegges, cutchynale, London treacle, amber greace, vardgreace, white balls, sweete powder, Benjamin and storax," and, strangest of all, a "box of marmilitt"; while no less than ten different works on medicine are given in his list of books; and of these, no doubt, not less than of his books of divinity and his beloved Tusser, he made much practical use. But all memory of his busy life would long since have faded away, had it not been for his last and most characteristic achievement. To his son, who was destined to succeed him, he had given the education of a gentleman; but, mindful perhaps of the difficulties which he himself had



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had to encounter in days past, he determined to leave behind him in writing a complete hand-book of farming practice—a sort of Tusser's "Poyntes," but amplified and specialised—which he entitled his book of "Directions and Remembrances." Accordingly, for some years before his death, he made this a labour of love: and one can well imagine him making his long-accustomed rounds about the farm, now with a double purpose; returning to the house, and sitting down among his books in the well-ordered parlour, ensconced, no doubt, in that notable walnut-tree arm-chair, to make a careful record of methods and results.

Of course he was a dogmatist. He was writing of what he knew and had proved; but he had never been above learning from any man, and he noted down the local saws, "the shepherds' phrases," as being well worth bearing in mind. Occasionally he would discuss alternatives of practice; but the appeal to experience settled all matters open to doubt—"our custome is": with that simple formula all uncertainty was at an end. There is but little of the writer's personality discoverable in this book of his; nor could one fairly expect that there should be. He knew precisely what he wanted to write, and he wrote that and nothing else; the stirring times of 1642 are noticed, as we have seen, merely in reference to their influence on the current prices of corn and meal; and his book of Remembrances served its purpose, no doubt, not less well in that the writer set down no word of current events or of his own idiosyncrasies. A record of farming operations of a bygone time, written in a manner absolutely plain and unadorned and in the minutest detail—the choice and management of sheep and cattle, the cropping of fields, the thatching of stacks, the care of implements, the hiring of servants, various points of law relating to landed property—this can have no great interest for the modern general reader. Yet we gather an

impression, not faint nor by any means displeasing, of the sort of man this seventeenth century yeoman was—a prudent and enterprising practiser of the ancient craft, an “exact man,” a lover of industry, order and thrift, and a generous rewarder of faithful service.

One intimate glimpse, however, we do catch, that of the careful husbandman teased by the importunities of a spendthrift. For Paul, the elder brother, though he had parted with the property and all just claims upon it, continued to sponge upon Farmer Henry with a pertinacity worthy of Ralph Bigod, Esquire, himself. In the account-book are numerous entries of sums “Layd out for my brother Paul.” “For a hat, 8s. 6d.; and for dymge and facing his other, 10d.”; “for 2 ruffs and thredd to make them, 1s. 8d.”; “for a pr. of showes, 2s. 6d.”; “for one

yard of ribbin, 9d.”; “for a pr. of stockings, 8s.”; “for a pair of silk garters, 3s. 6d.”; “for carridge from Cambridge, 9s. 9d.”—to say nothing of such items as “Pd. to my brother to go to John Lambert’s wedding, 5s.” and “Pd. to John Lambert more hee lent my brother Paull, 1s. 7d.”; so that there is a smack of not unnatural annoyance in the little outburst, “You spent and wasted in horses, corne and other goods, besides other debt due to servants and others, which did amount unto £30.” And one cannot help thinking that when Elia was excogitating the essay on “The Two Races of Men—the men who borrow and the men who lend,” he would have discovered a noteworthy illustration in the case of Henry Best of Elmswell and his elder brother, the Master of Arts, who lived “at his owne charge in one of the Universities.”

H. RAPHOE.

THE BAR SINISTER.

IT was one evening in early summer, as he was returning from his work, that Jack Woodleigh first met Nancy Lane. The hay harvest—a lavish crop, even for the West Country—was almost over, and it was past nine o’clock as he walked wearily through the village towards the cottage which he called “home.” A long procession of cows on their way back from milking were going down the lane ahead of him, herded by a young sheepdog. The puppy, impressed with his own importance and over-zealous, snapped and barked at the heels of the herd. Most of them, stately dowagers, greeted his efforts only by a kindly flick of their tails; but suddenly a young heifer, entering into the spirit of the thing, and gay as the puppy, flung up her heels, and started off at a gallop, with a few other companions as mischievous as herself. Then the catastrophe happened. Woodleigh suddenly heard a shriek, above the soft thud of the hoofs, and, quickening his steps, found a girl slowly extricating herself from the hedge, where she had been pushed by the hurrying cattle, while two streams of milk from the upturned cans at her feet explained the trouble.

She was such a pretty girl, too! Even the man’s tired brain took in that fact, and his eyes rested upon her for a second before he spoke. Her dark hair was ruffled into little wind-blown curls, for she had lost her hat in the confusion. The rich warm colour was glowing in her cheeks, while her brown eyes sparkled, partly with fear, partly with irritation. At last he picked up the cans, looking into each, to see if a vestige of milk remained.

“Tis a bad job, my lass,” he said. “The lane’s vair” (fair) “and narrow for they young things, when they gets a bit mischeevous like.”

“No one didn’t ought to send girt cows out wi’ only a pup to mind ‘em,” the girl answered, still angry.

Woodleigh felt that, in some way, he must be at fault, so tried to make the matter clear. “Varmer Jarge were only just behind,” he explained. “Thur he be, coming round the corner now. Hi, mister”—as the farmer came within earshot—“here be a maïd wot’s lost’en nigh on a quart o’ milk through they young heifers o’ yourn. They fair druv her slap agin the hedge.”

The farmer looked from Woodleigh to the girl, critically. “You be a stranger in these parts, I’m thinking?” he asked, kindly enough.

“Iss, I be,” the girl answered. “My name’s Lane, and I do work for Mr. Hartaway, to Upcott Farm. I wur coming up along, wi’ milk for mother and old Grannie Stone—her as lives next door to we—when they girt beästies cum rampin’ down the road, and I wur pushed vair backwards.”

The farmer burst into a hearty laugh. “Don’t ‘ee mind, my lass,” he said; “young things mun have their way sometimes. You go up to the farm, say I sent ‘ee, and missis ‘ull fill the cans for ‘ee. Then mother won’t be naught the wiser, nor old Grannie Stone neither.” Then, with another glance at Woodleigh, he went on his way, answering the girl’s thanks with a friendly “Good-night.”

Both stood and watched his retreating figure until it was swallowed up in the twilight. It was only when Nancy held out her hands for the milk-cans, which he still held, that Woodleigh roused himself with a start.

“He’s a rare good maester, sure ‘nuff,” he said. “’Twas a piece of luck that he hapt to come down along just then!”

“Do ‘ee work for he, then?” Nancy asked.

“Iss, fey, and there bain’t a better man in the country-side. Not but what you finds most volk is pretty good to you, I reckon,” he added, clumsily.

The girl laughed; even the awkward compliment pleased her, and prompted the quick answer that “He mustn’t judge other folk by himself.”

Then she wished him “Good-night” and left him; but it was not until the last faint jingle of her milk-cans had died away up the lane that he started once more upon his way homewards. He was no longer conscious of being tired. For the first time in his dull and lonely life he was haunted by a pair of bright eyes, by a flushed, winsome face appealing to him for help.

What was the man’s history, if that was not too expressive a word for the everyday existence, so colourless in its monotony? The bitterness of one memory still remained with him, although Time had mercifully blunted its edge. But as he walked on now, the realisation of it came to him afresh—that scene many years before: a lad listening in agony, only half understood, to a truth, blurted out in a fit of drunken anger, the record of a past sin, an evil name flung at him by his father; and then the rush out into the darkness, and the night-long wandering over the country-side, he never remembered where. And yet he had faced his life bravely enough at the time, going quietly back to the cottage in the early morning, and taking up his day’s work as usual; greatly to his father’s relief, if the truth be confessed, for he had a strong partiality for the lad, and already regretted his fit of temper. He was not an imaginative boy—the heroic idea of “running away” never even entered his head; he knew of nowhere to make for, and, in the depths of his quiet, self-contained nature there lurked a love of home and its familiar surroundings strong enough to resist the force of other pleadings and to drive them away.

“What had such as he to do with pretty faces?” he asked himself bitterly now, all his weariness returning upon him; he who had no right even to the name that he bore. Why had a girl’s face, just seen for a few moments on a summer’s evening, brought back the old bitter recollections? Who can say? Unless it is that the landmarks of life so often spring from a trifle, a chance word, a chance meeting; and, as we think over it, half unconsciously to ourselves we feel the workings of fate within us.

In spite of memories the days went on much as usual, only it now became a recognised thing that Woodleigh, on his return from work, always happened to be walking down the lane just as Nancy appeared on her way homewards, and it was only common civility to stop and ask the maid how she fared. One evening, however, he waited in vain. Slower and slower he walked, and, at last, stopping at a gate, he began leisurely to refill his pipe. After what seemed an age, but was, in reality, ten minutes, she appeared, walking quickly, and laden with a bundle as well as the usual cans.

“Law, Mr. Woodleigh! It be main surprisin’ to see yew at sich a time of night,” she exclaimed, as he came to meet her, drawing furiously at his pipe, as if in the fond hope of gaining a little self-possession by that means.

Whatever its origin, a sudden spasm of Dutch courage possessed him, and he quietly drew the bundle from the girl’s arm, tucked it under his own and, turning, walked on beside her. There was a singing in his ears, he had a calm conviction that all the blood in his body was somewhere up among the roots of his hair, while his mind was seriously debating how it was that no convulsion of Nature had accompanied such extraordinary daring. Nancy, however, seemed to look upon the matter very calmly. True, she had some difficulty in keeping up with her swain, who was striding along at a furious pace, so much so that at last she put a hand upon his arm, which brought him up as if he had been shot.

“Do ‘ee always walk that termenjus rate?” she asked, panting. “I be vair wore out.”

Woodleigh suddenly found his tongue, and his senses, and subsided, somewhat sheepishly, into his ordinary demeanour.

“Poor lass. I wur forgettin’, and ‘ee must be turble tired, too. What did make ‘ee so late?”

“Missis went into town, and I had to bide till her cum back, and then her wanted mother to wash some extry things, and thic hindered me more. But don’t ‘ee go fur to carry this girt bundle no farther, Mr. Woodleigh. We be just up along now.”

“I be goin’ to your gate,” answered Woodleigh, stubbornly, clutching the parcel, as though he feared it would be wrenched from him. “Tis too late fur maïds—zum maïds that is—to be out by theirselves.”

Nancy stared at him in amazement, as well she might, for it was a lovely summer evening, with only just a suspicion of

lengthening shadows under the trees, and the sky was still pink with the glow of the sunset.

"You'm turble partic'ler," she said at length, and then, with a dawning twinkle in her eyes: "But why do 'ee say 'zum mäids,' Mr. Woodleigh?"

Jack Woodleigh scratched his head reflectively; then he caught sight of the twinkle, now developed into a smile, and took heart. "Well, they dew say as how 'nowt never come to harm,'" he said, slowly, "and, yer zee, proper vitty mäids be turble scarce in these parts, and when us hev a-gotten 'em, why, us must tak' main good care to keep 'em. Do 'ee zee?"

Nancy laughed outright. "'Tis a bütivul evenin' anyway," she answered. "And 'tis girt thing to have a friend to help 'ee rayther than trudging all that way lonesome like."

Again Woodleigh was conscious of a tingling sensation rushing up among his hair, and as the maternal gate was now close at hand, he braced himself for yet another effort, which had been in his mind for the last five minutes. "'Tis rare weather for walkin'," he began, lamely.

"Summat warm-like," returned Nancy, in a dry tone, hardly yet cool from her efforts up the lane.

It was now Woodleigh's turn to laugh. "I won't take 'ee that pace, lass," he said. "But—will 'ee cum out along wi' I to-morrow afternoon?" (The morrow was Sunday.) "There's a bit o' Harpford Copse as I should main like fur 'ee to zee—where the bluebells be zo thick as vlies!" he ended somewhat lamely.

What was the attraction about this man; plain, rough, uncouth? Was it the honest admiration in the blue eyes—the one redeeming feature in his face—that made pretty Nancy Lane look almost shy in her turn, as she took her bundle from him, and answered softly: "'Iss, fey. If zo be as I can get whoäm" (home) "in time."

The "when" and the "how" of the meeting were not settled. There was a certain squareness about the man's shoulders which made such questions superfluous in any plan upon which he had set his heart.

Sunday proved to be a real summer's day, just a few light clouds to veil the heat of the sun, and a little breeze hardly strong enough to stir the young shoots of corn. At about three o'clock, Woodleigh, dressed in his Sunday best, tapped boldly at the door of Mrs. Lane's cottage. He was not going to hang about outside, not he, great though the effort had been to bring himself to the point of publicity. His knock was answered by Nancy herself, who felt constrained to ask this bold admirer if he would step inside. But her request was unheeded—I doubt if it was even realised, for, in a sudden accession of shyness, brought about, presumably, by this abrupt realisation of his happiness, all he could do was to turn to the gate, and hold it open, waiting for her to pass. They walked down the lane in silence, until a turn at the end brought them face to face with a small boy, whose look of disgust changed to a broad grin as he vanished hastily over the hedge and across the neighbouring field.

"That be Tom Rogers," remarked Woodleigh, as they watched the boy's flight. "He be mitchin'" (playing truant) "from Zunday Zchool, I reckon."

"Small blame to 'un," said Nancy; "on such a bütivul day."

"'Tis a wunnerful zeason, sure 'nuff," he answered. "They do zay as how there h'arn't been zuch a zeason fur nigh twenty year."

This was not quite what Nancy meant, but she was content to bide her time.

A little later on they passed some twenty little pigs pushing and scrambling at a gate, in a vain effort to get out. Woodleigh eyed them professionally.

"They'm a promisin' lot o' young slips," he said. "'Tis a pity as pigs be so wunnerful cheap."

"Be 'em?" said Nancy, curtly; the subject did not interest her just then, but Woodleigh was fairly launched.

"Why, I did go up to Squire's t'other day, fur to zee zum slips as master wur thinkin' 'pon. Squire he wanted one sovereign apiece, wuddn't take a farthin' less, zo he zaid, but I fair laughed in his face. 'Why, zur,' sez I, 'they bain't worth much more than half o' that, here-a-bouts. Volks is chok-full of pigs,' I sez."

But this interesting tale was never finished, for, as he leant over to scratch the back of a small porker more persevering than the rest, his hand suddenly touched Nancy's, as she too rested against the gate. His great fingers instantly closed over it, and, as he drew it through his arm, he looked gently into her face.

"I be a girt vüle, lass," he almost whispered. "It do zeem zo natural-like to talk to 'ee, that I a'most forget sich things mun be dull hearing fur a mäid. But we'm close to the copse now, and I want 'ee to zit down there, right in midst o' vlowers, and rest a bit."

They went on for a little way, until they came to a grass-grown path, along the side of a hill. After climbing this, and going through a small gate at the top, they found themselves in the wood. The way they went was known as the Lover's Walk, and, hackneyed though the name is, yet the beauty of this especial spot of Nature's privacy made it peculiarly appropriate. The path, ever rising higher, wound its way, on the left, by the side of a small stream, which rippled gently over the stones, on

its course down the hill, while on the right the bracken and undergrowth rose breast high, growing thick under the shade of the beeches, whose summer foliage allowed only a few shafts of sunlight to filter through into the cool depths beneath. The only sounds were the soft cooing of the wood-pigeons, broken every now and then by the chatter of a magpie, or the rustle of leaves as a rabbit hurried across the path.

Near the top of the hill, where the bracken grew less thickly, patches of bluebells began to show, and, at last, as Woodleigh and Nancy Lane came out into a little clearing, the girl burst into an involuntary cry of admiration. It seemed as though the country-side lay at their feet, the sloping lines of hill and dale spreading onwards until they were lost in the haze of the blue horizon—here the green of young corn, there the rich red earth just ploughed, then a field of mustard flashing back the sun's light in a riot of colour; with sometimes a farm or a few cottages, standing amidst orchards, still pink with late blossoms. And, in the Lover's Walk, under the ruddy stems of the beeches, the ground was carpeted with bluebells and ferns, spreading as far as the eye could reach, on to the borders of the common beyond, there to be lost amidst the golden splendour of the gorse. Nancy filled her hands with the flowers, full of delight at the bountiful size of her nosegay; she even picked a tiny spray of flower and fern, and put it in Woodleigh's button-hole, looking so innocent, and sweet as any flower herself, while she did it, that he had great work to prevent his arms folding round her, and taking her straight to his heart as she stood. But he managed to restrain himself; some instinct told him that the time was not ripe, he would only startle away the mischievous little god, who, as yet, hovered barely across his threshold. So, instead, he sat down quietly, and began to fill his pipe, with Nancy beside him, her lap full of flowers, which she occupied herself with making up into bunches.

They were not a very talkative couple; she told him a little of her life at the farm, and he, in return, spoke of his master, and of the bailiff's place, which would soon be vacant, and which he thought it just possible that he might be able to obtain. And so the summer's afternoon passed on, till they had to return homewards, reluctantly, yet with quiet content. The walk had not been eventful, but it was to prove itself the first of many, and both felt happier in the knowledge that it was likely to be so.

Both Woodleigh and Nancy were, however, somewhat surprised at the interest which they excited in the village during the next week or so. The girl, perhaps, with quicker perceptions, had an inkling of the cause; but it never dawned upon Woodleigh that Master Tom Rogers, while playing truant that Sunday afternoon, had spread the news far and wide that "John Woodleigh wur keepin' company wi' Nancy Lane," and he'd "a-zeen 'un tak' her hand and hold 'un ever zo, down by the ten-acre field, where Varmer Baxter kep' all they slip pigs!"

The weeks passed by, and, beyond the usual Sunday walk, which had now become a recognised institution, matters remained much as usual; there is a strict etiquette observed in these proceedings, and a formal "engagement," when both parties are living in the same village, is usually recognised only a short time before the wedding takes place. At last, one evening, Nancy's mother spoke to her daughter on the subject. She had thought it probable that the girl was only amusing herself, and saw no reason to interfere; but now time was drawing on, and the thing became more serious. To her amazement, she realised that Nancy was in earnest, and would listen to no words in any way derogatory of Woodleigh. In vain she argued and protested—she had hoped for a better match for this "superior" daughter—and then, losing her temper, reverted to the old scandal, only to find to her quick regret that the girl had never heard of it.

That was Saturday night, and on Sunday, when Woodleigh came as usual, she was ready to go with him, but looked very white, and was obviously ill at ease, and, in spite of his repeated questions as to what ailed her, she would answer nothing until they reached the now familiar copse. Then, to his horror, she flung herself down under the trees, and, covering her face with her hands, burst into tears, only stopping to reiterate now and then, as she rocked herself to and fro: "Why didn't 'ee tell me? Oh! Why didn't 'ee tell me?"

"Tell 'ee what, little lass?" said poor Woodleigh, as he knelt down beside her, and tried to take her hands into his. "I be vair mäized to know what be wrong wi' 'ee."

"Tell me about—about—your feyther." Even then she could not bring herself to lay any blame upon him.

Slowly Woodleigh got up and stood facing her; all the ruddy colour had faded out of his cheeks, leaving them like ashes, and the shadow of unutterable despair was in his eyes. So the old horror, dimly foreseen, had taken shape at last.

"Didn't 'ee know, lass?" he asked in a dull tone. "It be common talk down yonder"—pointing to the village—"and I never dreamt but what 'ee'd a-heerd it long ago. I suppose volks has forgotten it a bit, maybe—until now."

"Be it true?" whispered Nancy.

"'Iss, fey, true enough," he answered, bitterly. "Do 'ee want to hear all about it? It bain't a tale vit fur a mäid, but I

reckon that between thee and me this thing mun be properly talked out, now we'm on to it."

While he was speaking, Nancy had been watching his face, and now she reached up to his hand, as he stood beside her, and tried to pull him downwards.

"Sit 'ee down, John, man," she said. "It be better zo, and tell me just zo much as 'ee can; it be right fur I to know now."

The burden of pain in his face lightened a little at the pressure of her hand, and, sitting down, he began the miserable story—his father's anger, the hasty words, the night's wandering over the hills, then a few years later the break up of the home, and the discovery that, in spite of his dying words, and his undoubted and special love for the son whom he had wronged, the father had made no provision for him whatever. He had no legal right to a farthing, and he was reminded of the fact with brutal directness by the sons and daughters who gathered round, on the bare chance of an inheritance. As a favour, they allowed him to buy some of the furniture, which they did not want, and they also allowed him to provide for the aunt, who had lived with them since the mother's death. For this aunt he had worked, keeping together a small home, ever since. When the whole story was finished, there was a long silence, then Woodleigh slowly got on to his feet again.

"That be all, my lass. I reckon we mun be going back along now. 'Tis a rare pretty place, and us hev' been main happy here too. It wur just like a bütivul dream to think as a lass like you could have aught to do with such as I be. 'Tain't in reason, if 'ee cum to think o' it." And he turned to walk down the hill.

But Nancy followed him, and laid a restraining hand upon his sleeve. "Be I to go whoām all alone, John?" she asked.

He turned and looked at her, still with the shadow of such pain in his eyes that the girl almost quailed before it. But he answered nothing.

"Mun I go alone?" she whispered again.

He could bear it no longer. He shook off her hand from his arm, lest the touch of it should unman him, and answered roughly.

"It be cruel work to play with a man zo. Thee be best alone, lass. I only bring shame and talk upon 'ee. I hev' a-been zo wrapped in my dream, like, that I hev' a'most forgot as I couldn't offer 'ee even a name o' my own. But thee must let me go, now, Nance. I mun get away by myself, same as the beasteses do when they'm hurt main bad, get away into a quiet place and fight 'un drough."

Nancy hesitated only for an instant, and then spoke out.

"It bain't neither right nor just as *yew* should go on suffering fur sins as weren't none o' *your* doing. It hev' a-been like a black shadow on 'ee fur years. And—John—if zo be as there must be suffering—can't us just share together-like?—it 'ud cum easier that way, I'm thinking—and—John—don't 'ee go fur to send me whoām lonesome—" (her voice faltered and sank almost to a whisper); "thic path 'ud be turble strange only fur *one*, and I might—I might meet—zum more o' they cows—down along."

A sudden light burst at last through his blindness; he turned quickly, then with a cry that was well-nigh a shout he had her in his arms. So the dark shadows became absorbed in the sunlight which surrounded them, and with hearts full of that brightness, and the glory of the bluebells at their feet, they faced life together.

C. E. SLESSOR.

THE SCOTTISH THISTLE.



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

BELOVED OF THE GOLDFINCH.

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THE question of which of our fourteen native thistles has most claim to be regarded as the "emblem dear to Scotland's sons" is one of constant recurrence, and one which has frequently been put to me. The plant which is usually so designated by gardeners is the stately-growing *Onopordon acanthium*, or cotton thistle, so named from the whitish cottony hairs with which its stem and leaves are covered; but though common on waste lands in England, and of frequent occurrence in shrubberies, and on the outskirts of gardens in Scotland, in a semi-wild state, it is a very doubtful native of North Britain, and has certainly no good claim to the title of "Scotch Thistle." Notwithstanding this, it is the

plant generally carried in their processions by Freemasons; and with remarkable ineptitude has also been planted round Burns's grave in Dumfries, by friends who must surely have overlooked the fact that he, in whose breast the love of country burned with so bright a flame, could never have had an alien in his eye when he painted the picture of "Scotland greeting ower her thrissle."

The subject has received "most particular enquiry" in Leighton's "Flora of Shropshire," and therein it is stated that "we were told by an intelligent gentleman in the Hebrides, Donald McLean, a young chieftain, that what he showed us, the *Carduus eriophorus*, was the Scotch thistle. At Inverness Sir James Grant said the Scotch thistle was the only one that

drooped, *C. nutans*. After many such remarks we were at length assured by a very intellectual gardener at Roslin, and by Sir William Drummond at Hawthornden, that no particular thistle, but any one the poet or painter chose, was the national flower of Scotland; and this opinion we heard repeated in Edinburgh at the tables of several learned and hospitable gentlemen. Though generally emblematic of the whole nation, it is in particular the badge of the clan Stewart. On the wet sides of some hills we not unfrequently found the *C. heterophyllus*, or gentle thistle, which was much and justly admired, and by some (erroneously) thought peculiar to Scotland; this,



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

SPEAR THISTLE.

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however, could not be the national emblem, as, being destitute of thorns, it would ill accord with their formidable Latin motto."

Dr. Johnston, in his "Flora of the Eastern Borders," in commenting on the above, rallies the writer that, while he makes merry over the mistakes made by Cockneys, he should himself commit the error of going among the Gaël to make enquiries concerning a Scottish device, when, as he ought to have been aware, the clan from which the Royal Family descended had its origin in the Stewarts of Buncle, or Bonkil, in Berwickshire. According to Pinkerton, the first authentic mention of the thistle as the badge of Scotland is in Dunbar's poem, "The Thirssell and the Rois," written in 1503, on the occasion of the marriage of James IV. with Margaret Tudor, and Hamilton expressly states that the plant was the "monarch's choice." In 1537 Sir D. Lindsay refers to it as the emblem of James V. "quharein all Scotland saw their haill plesance." The earliest coins to be marked with the thistle were in the reign of James V., when only a single flower with some leaves at the base of the stem appears. In the succeeding reign sometimes three flower-heads are substituted for the single one, but they are all of the same type, and all accompanied by similar laterally spread leaves. The motto which is still that of the Order of the Thistle — "Nemo me impune lacessit" — first appeared upon the money of James VI. This, together with the fact that all the earliest representations show the head of the flower erect, and with spinous stem and leaves, would seem to put the claims of *C. nutans* and all nodding thistles out of court, and leave for consideration only *C. lanceolatus* and *C. marianus*. Dr. Johnston, to whose work already mentioned we are indebted for much information on the subject, was rather strongly in favour

of the claims of the latter species to the honour, very truly pointing out that the period at which the thistle was emblazoned was rife in religious associations and adoptions, and therefore particularly likely to be influenced by the fact that the milk thistle is in a manner dedicated to the mother of our Saviour, from whom it takes its specific name, as well as the trivial designation often applied to it of "Lady's" or "Our Lady's thistle." The legend runs that the beautifully diversified and numerous white spots and marks upon the leaf of the plant are due to some drops of the Virgin's milk having been spilt upon it. The late Professor Balfour adduced the further argument in support of the claim of *C. marianus*, that it seemed to have been cultivated about many of the old castles, round whose ruins it is still commonly to be found; but it is certainly not more abundant in such situations than the bur, or spear thistle, *C. lanceolatus*, which, by a consensus of opinion, is at the present day regarded as the true emblem of pride to every leal heart of auld Scotland. This was, without doubt, the plant which Burns referred to when he wrote:

The rough bur thistle spreading wide
Among the bearded bear,
I turn'd the weeder-clips aside,
And spared the emblem dear.

Sir Harris Nicholson traced the badge to James III., in an inventory of whose jewels thistles are mentioned as part of the ornaments; while an ancient tradition would carry its origin back to the time of the invasion of the Danes, when, in a night attack, a barefooted assailant accidentally trod upon a thistle, and uttering a cry from the sudden pain, aroused the sleeping Scots, who, promptly repulsed the attack and inflicted a severe defeat upon the enemy. A very similar story is told of a timely warning having been so given to Bruce when fleeing from his enemies; and, doubtless, the one tale has as much truth in it as the other.

The idea of cultivating thistles may seem curious to readers of the present generation, but in olden days the practice seems to have been somewhat extensively resorted to, the plants being gathered from the corn at harvest and stored as winter food for cattle. In Raine's "History of North Durham" it is related that the vicar of Norham once found it worth his while to take a tithe of his parishioners' thistles, and in 1344-45 there is an entry among the expenses of the Priory of Holy Island: "Gloves for 14 servants, when they gathered the tythe corn, 2s. 8d." Under an old ordinance thistles were exempt from payment of customs at St. Boswell's Fair, and several similar references to them might be quoted.

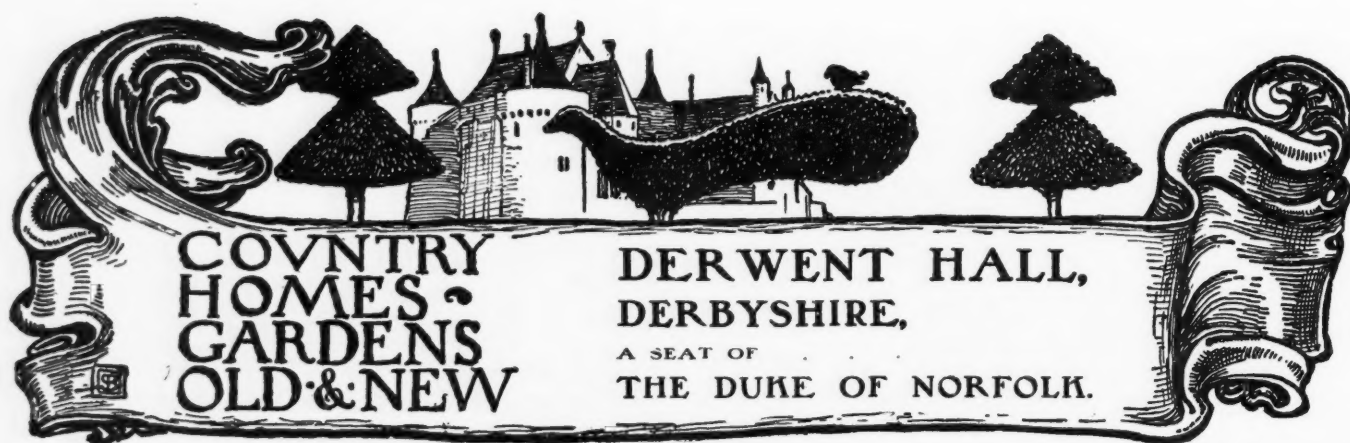
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M. C. Cottam.

GIANT THISTLE.

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DERWENT HALL is in the new parish of Derwent, a chapelry of the old Derbyshire parish of Hathersage in the High Peak. Hathersage itself is out of the track of modern travel, and the marvels of the Peak were perhaps better known when they must needs be reached by long stages of coach and post-chaise. In those days many came to Hathersage, for there in the churchyard were the two stones which marked the grave of "Little John, the Master's favourite man." We have seen Robin Hood reduced from an outlawed earl to a mere solar myth; but Hathersage, at least, had no doubt of his giant henchman, whose green cap and bow and shirt of mail hung up in the church. They hang there no longer, a Yorkshire family party of Shuttleworths having long since carried away the bow and the hauberk to Cannon Hall in Hallamshire, whence they have gone whither no one knows. The cap was the prey of some later tourist; but one is content to know that those who howked up the giant's thighbone from the grave had ill-luck until they covered it again. Derwent is a new name for this hamlet, which in ancient times was known as Waterside; for Derwent is the name of all Derwent Dale. It seems to have been part of the lands in

Hathersage which John Count of Mortaigne gave to the Abbey of Welbeck, confirming the gift when he became King of England. A Ferrers Earl of Derby had been dispossessed of this forest land which the King thus sealed away, and in after years the Welbeck monks found it wise to obtain from this Earl a second confirmation to make their holding sure. The Hathersages of Hathersage, ancient manor lords, added to the gift, as did the Langfords and Goushills, heirs of Hathersage; and here the abbots built a grange from which might be overseen the acres, which remained in their hands until the great house of Welbeck was dissolved by Henry VIII. Their chapel stood until a rebuilding in 1757, and another in 1867, made new work of it. Local legend connects with it some vague memories of the Highland host whom Prince Charles marched to Derby in the '45. A company of stragglers, as some have it, wandered into Derwent Dale, living by plunder until the Derwent folk hid their spoons in the very crows' nests. Others will have it that the poor plaidsmen were all starved to death within the chapel walls, and that their bones were laid in the nook of Smithy Hall, near the parsonage stables. It may be that some party of captured Highlanders were quartered by their guards here as





THE SOUTH GARDEN FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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"COUNTRY LIFE."

PART OF THE WEST FRONT.

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ENTRANCE TO FORECOURT

"COUNTRY LIFE."

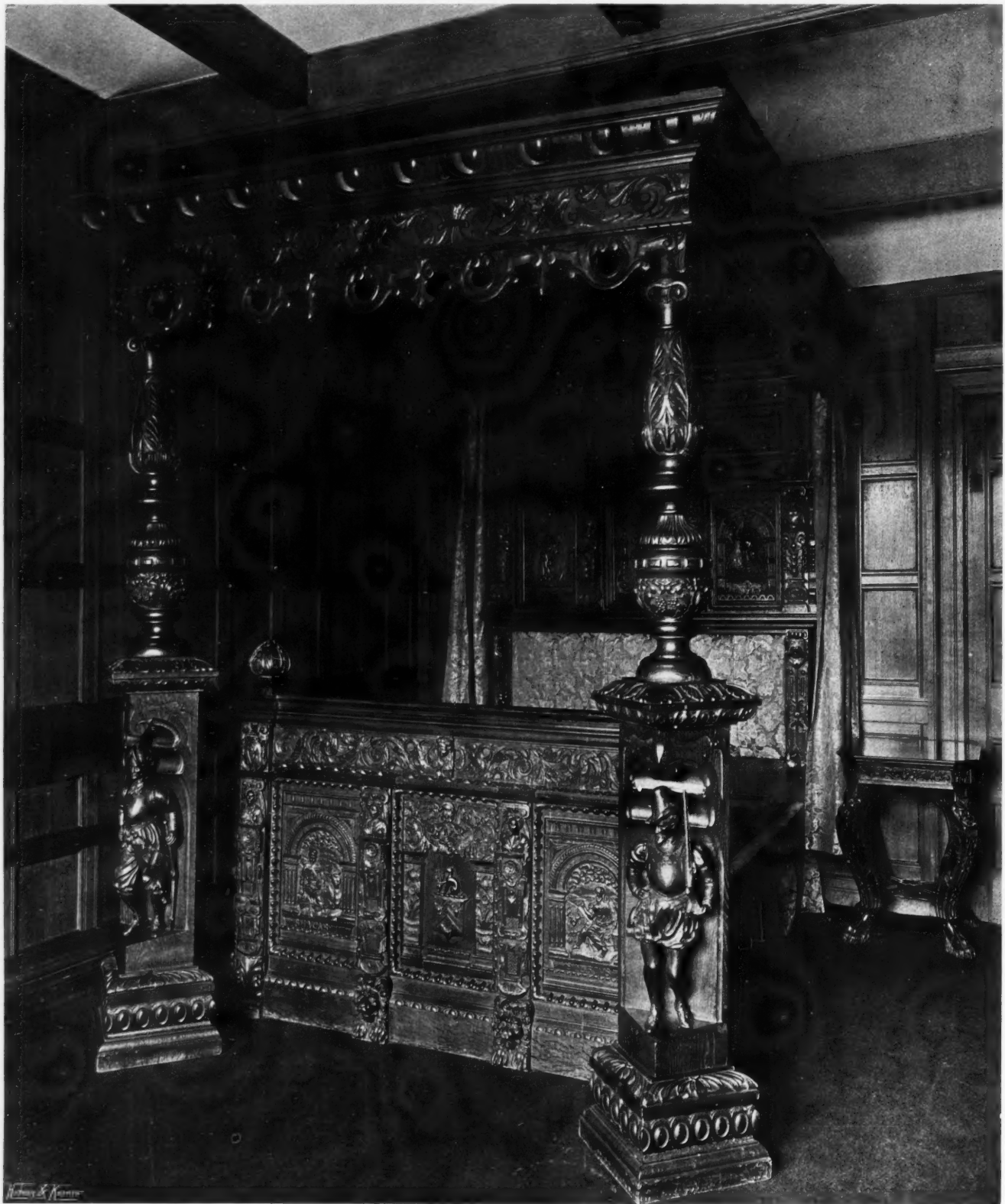
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elsewhere within the stout walls of the church. Derbyshire has many such stories of the last men who came from the North with arms in their hands, and there are families of Derbyshire farmers sprung from the deserters of a tottering cause.

The Cavendishes, Dukes of Devonshire, are lords of the manor in Derwent, and in the estate of Derwent Hall another ducal house meets them in this hamlet. Not far from where the water of Derwent is spanned by a narrow pack-horse bridge is the old hall. The Balguys built it, a family once numerous in the Peak, having houses at Aston Hall in Hope parish, at the Hagg, at Hope Hall and at Rowlee. Law was the hereditary trade of the Balguys, and Henry Balguy of the Hagg who built this house in the reign of Charles II., being then a man of above three-and-sixty, was so rich that, to cite Derwent legend again, he would pleasure himself by showing strangers the iron chest in which his gold coins were so tightly wedged that their fingers could not stir them. Such a rich old attorney with such another

iron chest plays the chief part in the legends of midnight murder, which belong to many such lonely houses as Derwent Hall, but Henry Balguy seems to have died tucked up in his bed. The arms borne by him—the shield of the Cheshire family with whom he had no ascertained kinship—are on the chapel font with the date of 1672, the year of the hall building, and the name HENRY BAVEGEY. This font had for a time drifted into the hall gardens to serve as a geranium vase, but pious hands have lately restored it to its holy office.

Old Henry Balguy was thrice married, his first wife, Grace Barber of Rowlee, bringing him, it is said, the money upon which the hall rose. We find him described as of Rowlee in 1676, so his wife may have had lands there; and when he died in 1685 he was buried not in Derwent Chapel, but in his father's burying-place at Hope. By his second wife he had a son and heir, Henry Balguy the younger, a man of four-and-twenty when the date of 1672 was cut in the roughly-tooled stone of his



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IN A BEDCHAMBER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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AN ELIZABETHAN BED.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

father's new hall, who was in turn succeeded by another Henry. Of Phillis, or Philippa, Balguy, sister of this last, remain some interesting though wildly-spelled letters, conveying to friends in Derby news of the little world in Derwent; and from these letters we may learn that the Balguys of Derwent Hall were of those families that prayed for a King over the water. Charles Balguy, a son of the third Henry, is one who gave a touch of wider distinction to his house than belongs to mere squires or attorneys. He was born in 1708 at Derwent; Chesterfield Grammar School taught him, and Cambridge made him a Bachelor of Medicine. He practised physic in Peterborough, where he found good company in a literary society, "with a pretty large collection of curiosities natural and artificial, such as shells, minerals, petrifications, prints, medals, et cætera, which now and then," wrote

one of his companions, "amuse us a little and give us the appearance of meeting to do something else than to smoke a pipe or drink a bottle." As a young physician he gave the Royal Society an account of the bodies of two poor folk, who, lost in a snowdrift on his native moors near Derwent, had, after being buried in the moor nigh thirty years, been dug up still whole and tanned by the peat. But it was in 1741 that he made his solid contribution to literature with a translation of those tales which the light-hearted Florentines told each other in the garden where they hid from the Black Death. Balguy's Englishing of the "Decameron" still holds the field as our best native version of a famous book, although reprints of his work are not careful to give the credit to the Peterborough doctor. "A man of strict integrity, various and great learning," he was by the

testimony of his tombstone, which is borne out by all who have written of him. His four sisters, according to a tale given Hunter, the antiquary, by one of their kinsfolk, all made runaway matches, and his elder brother, as it would seem, parted with his Derwent patrimony and practised as an attorney at Alfreton. This brother's heir, being a judge on the Carmarthen Circuit, bought Duffield Hall of the Wilmots, and there his descendants are still seated. The Balguys' hall of Derwent has their shield in the keystone of the door. It is built of stone, as a Derbyshire hall must needs be, and on the ancient lines, gable and mullion showing nothing of new-fangled Restoration fancies. It has been through many hands in a century. In 1817 we have it as "a farmhouse belonging to J. Bennet, esquire," and a farmhouse it probably remained until it came to the forties and fifties, when it became again a squire's house. The Duke of Norfolk owns it as a shooting-box, and Derwent Hall now sees its best days, its walls within clad in dark oak wainscot, some of which came from Norton House, pulled down in 1877. The tapestries have a curious history. Mr. Read, then the dweller at Derwent Hall, bought them when Worksop Manor, in Nottinghamshire, was dismantled by a Duke of Norfolk. They passed with the house to Mr. George Newdigate, from whom they came once again to the hands of the house of Howard, in an age when due respect is no longer lacking for ancient tapestries. Many ancient pieces of furniture have been brought together in Derwent Hall, a fine four-posted bedstead having been, as our picture shows, built into one of the bedrooms. The bedstead in another picture, although richly carved, is a piece of less value, being most apparently pieced together of old and new work.

The grounds are small, the river coursing 100ft. from the house along the south side, and a thick holly hedge separates

There was an industry once, wool-weaving or the like, but it has passed away with the five alehouses which by Derwent legend stood neighbourly together in the great days of old Harry Balguy.

THE HURDLE-MAKER.

IT is noticeable that men engaged in primitive crafts take an especial pride in their work. The reason is not far to seek. Nobody lends a hand from start to finish, and the art, though simple, is all the worker's own. Thus a ploughman can look with unmixed satisfaction upon his furrow turned straight and true; or a thatcher at the old homestead roof fresh clad in a new yellow jacket from ridge to eaves. If you walk into the quiet woods on a winter day, when all the birds except the robin are dumb, and have a talk with a hurdle-maker, it is ten to one that in five minutes you find yourself in the company of a man elated with a harmless vanity. So much the better for him. The art of wattling is among the most ancient of those simple devices which have been handed down without change to the present day. It competes with thatch alone in its claim to be the more striking feature in the architecture of our remote forefathers; for early converts to Christianity in these islands were gathered into churches with walls very like the wreathed hurdles with which the shepherd still folds his flock. The step from a shelter of bushes to an interweaving of branches must have been quite easy, and from that to wattling is no great stride. Among the remains of the lake-village on the moors near Glastonbury, wreathing has been found that does not materially differ from the hurdle of to-day; and modern savage peoples, far behind the lake-dwellers in civilisation, have used it for their huts.



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A CORNER OF THE DINING-ROOM

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the gardens from the highway. The eastern front, covered with ivy, looks over a great lawn and old gardens whose plan has been little changed. Before the house the ground rises toward a rugged Derbyshire height, and there is high ground to the northward likewise, where are timber trees and brushwood. Derwent beyond the garden walls is silent, pastoral country.

A hoar frost lay white on the red, decaying leaf and on the mossy clumps of hazel and other copse stuff where the under-wood had recently been cut. Yet sunlight was gleaming once more upon the trunks of oak and ash, that until a week or two ago had been in the shadow for many a year; and great beads of moisture were everywhere beginning to drop from the branches

overhead. The cutting had commenced at the end of autumn when the yellowing and fall of the leaf proved that the sap was gone; and the fallen copse-wood lay in long straight lines—strings is the proper name of them—which by reason of the gentle undulation of the ground took curves that were pleasant to the eye. Where the sticks had been cut, each with one deft blow of the woodman's hook, the tops of the stumps glistened

gaiters, and covering his right knee was a leather protection which he presently called a "knee-knap." He did not stop working while he talked, but having put aside the hurdle, turned towards his "rods." Sticks suitable for hurdle-making when trimmed clean of side shoots and cut off to a suitable length and thickness become "rods," and these were leaning against a frame made of three ash poles, two standing upright in the



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DERWENT HALL: FROM THE SOUTH GARDEN.

'COUNTRY LIFE.'

smooth and yellow in the light, and brightened the place in clumps, almost as thick as the primroses that are certain to be there next spring, now that the earth is open to the light and air. The glades were solitary, and would have been silent but for the sharp strokes of a nuthatch somewhere near, which had still found a slip-shell nut upon the ground and carried it to his chink in the bark of some tree near at hand. A cock pheasant stalked slowly across the alley in front of me and passed out of sight. And far away in the wood, where intermingling branches had made a dark screen and hid the landscape beyond, a drifting film of blue smoke was rising among the trees. I came to an open space where the strings had been cleared away and the stuff sorted to various uses. A stack of faggots stood close by. A lot of slender poles, grey ash and birch of a delicate silver with blotches of rich brown, were leaning against the fork of a sturdy oak. Near by the hurdle-maker was at work.

"You have made yourself a good fire," said I. "Though, as you work in shirt-sleeves, it would appear that you think little of the cold."

The remark seemed to amuse him, for he gave a loud guffaw, and took up the hurdle he had just finished to place it back upon his pile. "Ho! Ho! A man can zweet to the hurdle-maken, zo well as to any job I do know. I didden take the trouble to light up no vire not vor my own-zelf like. But when there's a vrost the rods be zo brickle as glass. You can't twist 'em, not no farshin at all, vor the life o' ee. A bit of vire of a marnen do sort o' melt the frostes out o' the rods like, an' then you can turn to. Though, mind me, the zun 'ull drop into theas carner pretty quick now. Let he jus' gie a bit o' a squint down here like, an' you don't want no vire."

He was a fine stalwart man of about five-and-thirty. He had spoken the truth, for, although his billycock hat was on the back of his crown, I could see beads of moisture standing upon his forehead. His sleeves were rolled up, but not so high as the elbow, and showed his arms muscular and hairy. He wore

ground with one across, in the shape of a country boy's "jumping gallows." Some hurdle-makers set up a couple of hurdles behind them, and the support which holds the rods "all han'-pat" and ready for use, whatever it may be, is called the "back hurdle."

"Every man have a-got his own fancy, I do suppose," laughed he, "an' mine is for theas-here bit of a gallis made to suit my own height like."

He chose with care a rod exceptionally large and straight. He was evidently on his mettle and prepared to show how a really artistic hurdle should be made; for as he stooped to pick up his hook, he glanced at me to be sure that I was looking. He held up this rod so that the butt-end came nicely at a striking distance, and with four blows cut off four clean chips, and the rod was as sharp as a lead-pencil. At his feet lay a block of timber bored with ten holes 6in. apart. He thrust the rod into the outside hole, held it upright and drove it home with a tap or two of the flat of his hook.

"He do make a tidy outzide zail," said he.

"A what?"

"A zail," he chuckled. "I've a-heard tell that when the King gied our Sir John up here a tap 'pon the shoulder he made un a Sir. Wull, when I gied thik rod a tap I made un a zail. There, I do suppose we do all act accordin' to our degree like. Once they be stuck up in the vlake there they be zails, all ten o' 'em. An' that's the most o' the difference in we menfolk, too, I do 'low, whe'er we do hap to be up or down. Vor if I ca'ant make a Sir, I'll be dalled if I do think the King could make zo very much ov a hurdle, zo there. His Majesty 'ud vall out wi' shepherd. I'll warrant it."

He gave silent consideration to this proposition while hastily conferring the accolade on the nine other rods. Then, with ten sails fully set, though they were in fact only bare poles, we were ready to set out upon the wreathing. Leaning against his back hurdle were wands of many varieties—brown hazel, grey ash, green withy, dog's timber and whip-top, to use his own names.

He chose a likely hazel rod, placed it between two of the sails, then wreathed it in and out along the others until he reached the end. There he twisted it, so that it would turn round the outside sail without snapping, wreathed it back as far as it would go, and took another. Sometimes with his spar-hook he cleverly split a rod that might be a trifle too large and thus made two of it. And now and again, as the wreathing gradually rose, he brought his knee-knap into requisition, and kneeling with all his weight on the interwoven rods, forced them down together close and tight. At last he came to the top rod, twisted it twice around the outside sail, and made the end fast with care. "An' thik we do call a finisher," said he, glancing round at me with pride.

So the hurdle was made, and had now only to be trimmed up. With his hook, and the skill of a Chinese executioner, he snicked off the heads of the sails one after another all to one height. Then, lifting the hurdle out of the flake, he trimmed away the ends of the wreathing until all was neat.

LILLIPUTIAN VAMPIRES.

And if the fleas be troublesome,
We kill them when we catch 'em.

WITH these lines, it may be remembered, Mephistopheles, entertaining a company of roysterers in Aurebach's cellar in Leipzig, concludes his droll song which opens with the lines

Once on a time there was a king,
A lovely queen had he—
But dearer far than queen or son
He loved a big black flea.

But modern discoveries have shown, however, that the flea may be something more than troublesome, inasmuch as it but too often serves as the carrier of one of the most dreaded of all scourges—the plague! This fact has taken a very long while to unearth. Indeed, the rôle which this much-despised creature plays in this stupendous work is among the latest of latter-day discoveries. A year or two ago the horrors of a plague outbreak were attributed to rats; now we know that it is the rats' flea which is guilty of this gruesome deed. But the flea is not without his rivals, and these too among his near relatives; for the mosquito and the tsetse-fly are, in their way, as much to be dreaded, the one distributing malaria, the other sleeping sickness. At the same time, in fairness to these creatures, it must be said that their horrid work is not carried on with malice aforethought—they are, on the contrary, the unconscious hosts of these ministers of disease and death. Happily, in this country, blood parasites—to which these diseases are due—have been exterminated; but during the earlier part of the nineteenth century this was not the case, for ague in low-lying districts was all too common, and this, as we now know, was due to parasites spread by gnats or mosquitoes. Though the gnats remain, they are now relatively harmless; that is to say, they no longer infect us as they did our forbears. This has been brought about in a very roundabout way. The two main factors have been drainage and the migration to the towns of a large number of the rural population, whereby those who perforce had to live in the danger zone were enabled to find work on drier ground, taking the place of those who had moved into the towns. The drainage reduced the gnat population to an enormous extent, while the shifting of the ague-stricken out of the reach of the gnats put an end to the existence of the parasites, which, dying with their hosts, left no descendants. The now reduced gnat population, having no source of reinfection—the ague-smitten being beyond their reach—though they may leave "the mark of the beast" on intruders into their domain, can do no more. Nevertheless, mosquitoes can yet, as many of us know to our cost, make life very trying at times. And, as if these were not enough, dwellers in the country from May to autumn have to contend with more or less severe persecution from midges and numerous other blood-sucking flies.

Now that the rôle of these small pests is being more clearly understood, there will doubtless arise a desire to know something of their nature and life-history, especially since this may enable the enquirer at least to mitigate the virulence of their attacks. Up to the present time, however, there has been no readily accessible source of information, save only the authorities at the Board of Agriculture or the British Museum of Natural History. Realising this, the trustees of this latter institution have issued a small volume by Mr. E. E. Austen on "British Blood-sucking Flies," a volume which will prove at once both interesting and valuable. Mr. Austen writes, not as one whose field-knowledge of his subject is gained at second-hand, but from an intimate personal acquaintance gathered from disease-smitten areas in the tropics—he himself having fallen a victim to malaria—as well as by less painful experience at home. He begins his tale of these insect scourges with an account of the midges. Though the smallest of all the blood-sucking flies—one of the species he describes and figures

"There!" cried he, with simple vanity. "Catch hold o' un an' shake un. Thik's a hurdle."

The statement was not to be gainsaid.

"How do you know when you have carried the wreathing high enough?"

"Ah! I do know. Take a dozen o' 'em, mēaster, an' measure 'em. They be vower-voot-zix in length an' two-voot-ten in hei'th, an' you'll vind 'em zo like as peas in a pod. 'T'es all eye an' use, mēaster. Wull, there, you zee, there's zome do do one thing and zome t'other. But I can make a hurdle wi' any man, I can. Zo there!"

The sun had risen high enough to look into his corner. The fire had dwindled to a heap of smouldering embers. As I walked homeward across the wood a squirrel ran along the branch of a beech tree. Hunger and the warmth of the sun had aroused him for an hour to pay a visit to his hoard of nuts.

(*Ceratopogon varius*) not exceeding 1¼ m.m. in length—they cause, he remarks, in the British Islands at any rate, from their pertinacity and blood-thirstiness, "more discomfort and annoyance to human beings than the species of any other family mentioned in this book; and during the spring and summer months, in the evening hours when they are most active, their presence often constitutes a serious drawback to life in the country. Occasionally midges occur locally in such numbers as to amount to a veritable plague." But we must hasten to remark that out of the fifty species of British midges only a few are known to suck blood, and the habit, it is sad to have to say it, is confined to the female sex. Another species (*Ceratopogon pulicarius*) makes its appearance in certain parts of England at the latter part of April, and has a most virulent bite. The year 1904 was memorable for the activity of these Lilliputian tormentors. In many localities near London—Epping Forest and Harrow—their attacks were so formidable that people found it impossible to remain in their gardens after 5 p.m.

The family of the Culicidæ, the gnats, or mosquitoes—for it is a mistake to suppose that the word mosquito is not synonymous with the Old English word gnat—are no less formidable enemies to the peace and contentment of dwellers in the country. As distributors of ague, as we have already remarked, they are now paralysed, but they are, nevertheless, capable of inflicting a great deal of pain and discomfort; cases are on record, indeed, where the stabs of these insects have caused death. The handsomest of our British gnats—*Grabhamia dorsalis*—has a bright tawny thorax banded with longitudinal stripes of cream colour, while the abdomen is ringed with cream colour on a chocolate background. Its beauty, however, is delusive, for it has a most virulent bite. It is known also as the Norway mosquito, since, according to tradition, it was introduced into this country by a certain yacht plying regularly between Aldeburgh and Norway. This is possible, for it is now known, through the researches of the officers connected with the Welcome Research Laboratory at Khartoum, that the river steamers have continually reinfected Khartoum after the district had been cleared, these pests sheltering on the voyage down in the cabins. As in the case of other blood-sucking flies, all the mischief is done by the females; and the torment they inflict is rendered all the more irritating by the knowledge that existence for them is quite possible on a vegetarian diet, for it has been shown that even the very worst of these pests will, in the absence of suitable vertebrates, contrive to live very comfortably on the juices obtained by tapping the stems of plants!

As touching the relation between ague and mosquitoes, it is to be noted that there are mosquitoes and mosquitoes. In other words, the ague, or malaria, parasite is carried only by certain species. Thus in this country the common gnat (*Culex pipiens*) was, so far as this is concerned, quite innocuous; the infection was brought about by the stab of a species belonging to a quite distinct genus—*Anopheles*. *Anopheles maculipennis*, or the spot-winged mosquito, may be distinguished at a glance from his more innocent relative by the way he holds his hind legs. *Culex*, as if fearing vengeance, adopts the tactics of "hands up!" In other words, he raises the last segment of the hindmost leg till it stands at right angles to its supporting segment, and submissively bends his head downwards. His most aggressive relative *Anopheles*, on the other hand, keeps his feet down and his head extended straight before him.

The midges, by the way, are quite commonly confounded with their relatives the gnats. The former are, with the exception of the genus *Ceratopogon*, quite harmless, and spend much of their time on fine summer evenings in the innocent pastime of dancing up and down in great clouds. But when cabinet specimens are examined another method of recognition must be



A. Horsley Hinton.

THREATENING CLOUDS.

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employed. If the wings be examined with a lens, it will be found that in the gnats the vein that runs along the fore margin of the wing is carried round the tip and runs along the whole hinder margin, while in the midges this vein stops at the tip; again, in the gnats the veins are covered in delicate scales, and similar scales fringe the hinder margin of the wing. Further, the gnats have a conspicuous proboscis, while that of the midge is so short as to be invisible without the aid of a lens.

By the way, those who suffer from the unwelcome attentions of gnats during the summer months might often reduce the number of these enemies by carefully covering tanks and water-

barrels and covering the surface of ponds wherever possible with a thin layer of paraffin oil, which effectually destroys the larvæ, while any eggs deposited on the film will fail to develop, and many of the females will be killed as they come to deposit their burden. The fine report just issued by the officers of the Welcome Research Laboratory at Khartoum shows that this plan has been so successful that mosquitoes have, indeed, been almost exterminated in and around that town.

The dreaded horse-flies, known also in different parts of the country as breeze-flies, dunflies, gadflies, and in certain parts of Kent as brimps, form the subject of the concluding part of

Mr. Austen's most admirable book. Some of these assume a quite respectable size, the female of *Tabanus sudeticus*, for example, measuring 1 in. in length, and having an expanse of wing of as much as 1½ in. The horse-flies enjoy a world-wide distribution, and number some 1,560 distinct species, of which twenty-two occur in Great Britain. One of these, *Chrysopos hæmatopota*, in quite another sense may be said to be marked by the "pride of eye and sinful lust of flesh," inasmuch as it possesses the most gorgeously-coloured eyes of all insects, being of a wonderful golden green and purple shade. It has an extensive range, and proves a scourge alike to mules, camels and even elephants.

In parts of Russia, *e.g.*, the district of St. Petersburg Government, horse-flies are so extraordinarily numerous that agricultural operations have to be carried on by night; while in parts of Siberia, as on the shores of the river Om, settlers have been obliged to abandon their homesteads. But deliverance has been brought by a Russian investigator—Portchinsky—who covered the surface of the lakes and pools in the district with petroleum. As a consequence, enormous numbers were destroyed on their

attempting to drink, since they adhered to the oil and were drowned, while such as crawled away were either poisoned or choked by the petroleum.

Stomoxys calcitrans is another of these pests which during August and September may, even in this country, work considerable mischief. An instance, for example, is recorded where a vet. had no less than fourteen cows under treatment, which had been bitten chiefly outside the legs and on the shoulders. In some the joints had so swollen that the poor beasts could not bend their legs to lie down, and the inflammation, therefore, rose so high as to cause the loss of the outer skin and hair of the injured region.

Such, in brief, is the scope of Mr. Austen's book, which should be read by all who are interested in the amazing wealth of life which is to be met with during the summer months in these islands, or who may wish to know something of the character and life-history of these winged tyrants of the summer-time. The illustrations in this work are, of their kind, the finest which have yet been produced.

W. P. PYCRAFT.

FROM THE FARMS.

TOWN AND COUNTRY COWS.

IN the opinion of sanitary inspectors town dairies are much more cleanly than those in the country. They say that the London establishment is kept carefully under control, and is periodically inspected, whereas in the country the farms often lie so far apart that it is impossible for the inspector to go very frequently to them. Many of them are close and ill-ventilated, while cleanliness is not attended to as much as it should be. Often, too, the sanitary inspector is also surveyor and school attendance officer, and he cannot afford the time to give to the dairies that would be necessary to ensure their efficiency. These comments receive additional force from the understanding that the Royal Commission appointed in 1901 to enquire into relations between human and bovine tuberculosis came to the conclusion that contagion is carried by milk. They even go so far as to assert that cooking does not destroy the disease germs, and that the meat itself must be tainted. These are

most suitable class, it remains to be shown that other kinds will not do well, and possibly just as well, in favourable circumstances, in the Orange River Colony, at any rate.

THE FARM ORCHARD.

In a column such as this we do not often discuss things that are simply beautiful and nothing else. Yet it is good to remember that man, not even the farming man, lives by bread alone, but beauty is an element which belongs to all sorts and degrees of life, and at this season of the year it comes stealing upon us in ways that seem to be unpremeditated. About halfway down the lane that leads to the sand dunes and the sea, there is a little arch cut in the hawthorn hedge with a wicket gate across it; inside is a flagstone, at the foot of seven steps, hewn out of limestone. Save for a worn patch in the centre of each, flagstone and steps are covered with a green moss. At the foot of each gatepost there is a group of scarlet and orange fungus like mountain peasants waiting at their chapel

doors. Here and there in the wall at the side of the steps are bunches of houseleek, and in the corners yellow leaves gather and lie until the spring. At the top of the steps in late January there comes a thin line of snowdrops, that stand out against the skyline like a row of tiny sentinels. In the dawns of February they are seen at their best; then each bell shines against the sky like a star in early December afternoons, and when a breeze blows over them they swing joyously. From the top of the steps a pathway of flagstones winds away under the trees of an old orchard and disappears into shadow. Along the sides of a pathway snowdrops are growing; they have even run in between the flags and pushed themselves up through the cracks and holes in the centre till they have made a pathway of flowers. Their background is the velvety moss, against which, where a flower grows, you can trace the tender stalk and the thread from which the bell hangs suspended, the outer petals showing here and there the faint green that borders the scented inner cup. Dotted all over the brown soil are white groups of the flowers, many of them in sheltered hollows made



B. H. Bentley.

SNOWDROPS.

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by the gnarled roots. Some make rings round the weather-beaten trunks, and into one hollow tree they seem to have drifted to shelter like wind-blown snow. Spring's transformation scenes follow each other quickly. The first beauty of the snowdrops is hardly over when one day the crocuses appear.

SOIL INOCULATION.

We have received a considerable amount of correspondence in regard to the directions for soil inoculation given by Professor Bottomley last week. Among others, Mr. Arthur W. Sutton writes giving us the actual results of his experiments. They have not been favourable, though they seem to be exhaustive and were very carefully checked. He says, "The net result as shown by these experiments certainly does not warrant the labour and expense of inoculation." The failure, however, may be accounted for easily enough. It probably arises from using dead or inferior culture media. We give Mr. Sutton's table, and hope to supplement it in a future number by

CATTLE FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

Visitors to the recent Dairy Show at Islington will remember the fine Devon cattle exhibited there. The Director of Agriculture in the Orange River Colony, Mr. C. W. Jarvis Palmer, has recently bought a small herd of Somerset and North Devon cattle to be shipped to one of the Government stock farms in that colony. The shipment is comparatively a small one, but if, as Mr. Palmer thinks, this class of English cattle is well suited to the conditions prevalent in the Orange River Colony, the prospect should be distinctly encouraging for cattle raisers here. South Africa will be capable of taking a large annual supply of cattle if the experiment proves successful; and though it is thought at present that the North Devon stock is the

the results of those who have obtained fresh stuff just at the moment when they wanted it:

EXPERIMENTS IN PEA INOCULATION, 1905.

		Produce		
		Gal.	Qt.	Pt.
Bountiful, American, inoculated	...	4	1	0½
" German, "	...	4	2	1
" uninoculated	...	4	1	0½

These were treated and sent us by Professor Middleton. Ten rows of each sown at farm, March 31st, 1905.

Received from the United States Department of Agriculture, material for inoculating peas. One quart each of the following were treated and sown the day following the inoculation. Also sown one quart of each uninoculated. All sown April 15th, 1905:

		Produce		
		Gal.	Qt.	Pt.
Little Marvel, inoculated	...	1	1	1½
" uninoculated	...	1	1	1
Early Giant, inoculated	...	1	0	0¾
" uninoculated	...	1	0	0¾
Bountiful, inoculated	...	1	1	0¾
" uninoculated	...	1	2	0½
Duke of Albany, inoculated	...	0	2	1¾
" uninoculated	...	0	3	0¾
Maincrop, inoculated	...	0	3	0½
" uninoculated	...	0	2	1¾
Peerless, inoculated	...	1	0	1½
" uninoculated	...	1	1	0

Also for soil inoculation, about one peck soil moistened with inoculating medium, this mixed with one bushel of soil and spread over a small piece of ground. This was then forked in, and on it sown one pint of Early Giant peas ... 0 2 1½

Alongside one pint of Early Giant peas sown for comparison. Soil not inoculated or treated in any way ... 0 3 0

"NITRO-CULTURE" EXPERIMENTS, CLOVERS, ETC., 1905.

Plots 5yds. by 5yds. were sown on April 15th with dressed and undressed seed of trifolium, giant hybrid cow grass, single-cut cow grass, trifolium medium, alsike, white Dutch, lucerne, and sainfoin. Careful notes were taken through the summer till August 9th, when the plots were cut and weighed. Any differences were all in favour of the undressed plots.

NITRAGIN TRIALS, 1905. SOWN APRIL 15TH, CUT AUGUST 9TH.

	Weight per acre, Green.					
	Dressed.			Undressed.		
	cwt.	gr.	lb.	cwt.	gr.	lb.
Early Red Trifolium (from Professor Middleton) ...	10	2	24	17	3	12
Early Red Trifolium (dressed at Reading) ...	35	2	24	35	2	24
Giant Hybrid ...	107	0	6	107	0	6
Single-cut cow grass ...	110	2	24	110	2	24
Trifolium medium (not sufficiently advanced) ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Alsike ...	125	0	0	125	0	0
White Dutch ...	125	0	0	125	0	0
Lucerne ...	55	1	12	58	3	20
Sainfoin (poor plant) ...	—	—	—	—	—	—

In addition to the plots a duplicate set of trials in pots in pure sand were simultaneously sown, and here again any slight differences were in favour of the undressed seed.

In the Journal of the Board of Agriculture for February, 1906, we are told that "The cultures from Munich were, on the whole, fresher than those from Washington, which latter were, in some cases, received as early as the autumn of 1904, though they could not be used till the following spring." Obviously cultures obtained in 1904 could not be very fresh when used in the spring of the following year, and we cannot wonder that the experiment in most of the colleges to which inoculating materials were sent proved a complete failure. In Aberdeen lucerne was much better where it was untreated, and in only a few cases did the culture produce a slight improvement in the crop. The conclusion at which the Journal of the Board of Agriculture arrived after this very inadequate trial was that "the subject of plant inoculation in this country has not yet passed the experimental stage, and more work is required before one can feel at all justified in recommending either method for adoption on a field scale." Surely all this tends to show that there was a certain lack of enterprise on the part of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. It is to be hoped that the error will be speedily rectified, and that we shall have an opportunity of knowing what the results of applying fresh cultures are.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

SINCE Rudyard Kipling wrote "The Jungle" the animal hero has figured frequently in fiction, but the most elaborate and ambitious study of this kind that we have read lately is Jack London's *White Fang* (Methuen). The author some years ago sprang suddenly into fame over certain tense and dramatic short stories which had for setting the wild Yukon country. The work seemed then to offer unbounded promise, but in more recent books this has been somewhat belied. It may be said at once that we consider *White Fang* to be an unsatisfactory performance, even though it possesses the merit of holding the attention from beginning to end; but a thing which is fundamentally wrong can scarcely pretend to any permanent value. Even suppose we grant that a hybrid between the dog and wolf is possible, this would not militate against a vigorous condemnation of this as a work of art. The only portion of it that is real and natural is the sensational opening, where we find two hunters conveying a corpse across the frozen wild. Their goods are carried on a dog-drawn sledge, and the party is closely pursued by a pack of wolves:

Bill opened his mouth to speak, but changed his mind. Instead, he pointed toward the wall of darkness that pressed about them from every side. There was no suggestion of form in the utter blackness; only could be seen a pair of eyes gleaming like live coals. Henry indicated with his head a second pair, and a third. A circle of the gleaming eyes had drawn about their camp. Now and again a pair of eyes moved, or disappeared to appear again a moment later.

One of these hungry creatures is a hybrid that has apparently been accustomed to civilisation, for it comes into camp and not only steals the meat of the dogs, but entices them to the pack. The hungry she-wolf is described as smiling at her victim in an ingratiating manner and luring him to his ruin. He sees his mistake too late:

Before they saw the cause, the two men saw him turn and start to run back toward them. Then, approaching at right angles to the trail and cutting off his retreat they saw a dozen wolves, lean and grey, bounding across the snow. On the instant, the she-wolf's coyness and playfulness disappeared. With a snarl she sprang upon One Ear. He thrust her off with his shoulder, and, his retreat cut off and still intent on regaining the sled, he altered his course in an attempt to circle around to it. More wolves were appearing every moment and joining in the chase. The she-wolf was one leap behind One Ear and holding her own.

It will be observed that these are the manoeuvres of Red Indians rather than of dogs or wolves. She is the mother of

White Fang, the hero of the story. This brute, though born in the wild, feels a call towards civilisation. The impression made by his first experience of mankind is thus described:

Every instinct of his nature would have impelled him to dash wildly away, had there not suddenly, and for the first time, arisen in him another and counter instinct. A great awe descended upon him. He was beaten down to movelessness by an overwhelming sense of his own weakness and littleness. Here was mastery and power, something far and away beyond him.

The cub had never seen man, yet the instinct concerning man was his. In dim ways he recognised in man the animal that had fought itself to primacy over the other animals of the Wild. Not alone out of his own eyes, but out of the eyes of all his ancestors was the cub now looking upon man—out of eyes that had circled in the darkness around countless winter camp-fires, that had peered from safe distances and from the hearts of thickets at the strange, two-legged animal that was lord over living things. The spell of the cub's heritage was upon him, the fear and the respect born of the centuries of struggle and the accumulated experience of the generations.

It is scarcely necessary to point out that this is part of the rotten fabric on which the novel is built. Fear and respect are misplaced. We need not follow his adventures too closely. He falls into the hands of a man who makes money by fighting dogs, and is very nearly killed in a battle with a bulldog, the said battle evidently being described from hearsay. Anyone who really understands dogs does not require to be told that the bulldog's reputation as a fighter is mythical and traditional. However, after the battle is over a philanthropic and sentimental dog-lover comes upon the scene, who is henceforth described as the love-master of the hybrid. By the necromancy of his kindness he changes the fierce and savage half-wild beast into his most faithful companion. Jack London applies to the dog psychological methods that he might have learned from Henry James:

The thumb of circumstance had done its work only too well. By it he had been formed and hardened into the Fighting Wolf, fierce and implacable, unloving and unlovable. To accomplish the change was like a reflux of being, and this, when the plasticity of youth was no longer his; when the fibre of him had become tough and knotty; when the warp and the woof of him had made of him an adamant texture, harsh and unyielding; when the face of his spirit had become iron and all his instincts and axioms had crystallised into set rules, cautions, dislikes and desires. Yet, again, in this new orientation, it was the thumb of circumstance that pressed and prodded him, softening that which had become hard and remoulding it into fairer form.

It will, we think, be generally admitted that in this passage the author attains to a height of absurdity rarely if ever reached before. Under the new rule *White Fang* develops

a sentimentality which must go straight to the heart of the multitude, as witness the following very lyrical passage:

White Fang was howling as dogs howl when their masters lie dead. He was voicing an utter woe, his cry bursting upward in great heart-breaking rushes, dying down into quavering misery, and bursting upward again with rush upon rush of grief.

The rest of the story follows the convention of its kind. White Fang comes into conflict with a female collie, but "to attack her would require nothing less than a violation of his instinct."

The hint will be sufficient to show that the author works into the dog's life some of that romance which is expected in the weakest class of novels. We find it very disagreeable reading. The culmination of the story lies in an act of valour on the part of the dog-wolf that must equally endear him to the heart of the lady's-maid. Serious criticism would be wasted in showing how wrong and untrue to nature all this is. Most of the writing depends on the exercise of that imagination which aims at setting up fictitious thoughts and feelings in an organism of which the author must necessarily be ignorant. He makes the animal impressive, not by observation, but by endowing White Fang with thoughts, feelings and ambitions that are purely human. It will be noticed by our naturalist readers that not only does Mr. Jack London assume the hybridisation of the dog and wolf, but also that the hybrids breed freely.

SKATING OR PIKE.

YOU should have brought your skates, sir, not pike rods," were the words that greeted five desperately chilly travellers last week as they entered the door of an hotel in a little town perched on old Celtic earthworks in a south-western county. But it was too late. Londoners, with all their opportunities in the Home Counties, do not travel 140 odd miles to skate, and pike-fishing, or rather pike-hunting, it had to be. But many a time during the next two days, with a bitter wind blowing unchecked up the river banks, did one benumbed fisherman think regretfully of a certain pike pond in the depths of a wood, and the black ice there that rang so musically to his strokes. Lonely enough it was in the early morning when first reached, but the surface, which no wind could get at, was perfection, and, given freshly-ground blades, made an ideal "practice pitch" for figures of ever-increasing size. And there hour after hour could be spent working hard to master some new turn or in correcting old faults, till the sound of voices broke the stillness, and out to the bank steps a gay party, who have driven over with rugs, luncheon and tea baskets, and all the baggage of a country picnic. It is a rare experience in these parts, and everyone means making the most of it. There is no more silence in the wood, and the pike under the ice have a hard time of it, being chivied about unceasingly till they turn sulky and retire to the bottom of the deepest end. Shortly after lunch more people turn up, and a hockey match is made—house party against house party—till tea is announced. Did I forget to mention it? Of course a kettle was brought and wood to boil it, and some potatoes to roast in the wood ashes. How light the feet feel as the lake is left, after being carefully brushed and flooded, and the skater who had been there all the morning vows he will come back after dinner and continue "by the light of the moon"; but I doubt it, unless, indeed, he could persuade a second person to accompany him, and though that second person would doubtless be willing—she will indignantly deny it, of course, if she ever sees this—yet there are such things as chaperons, and it is safe to wager on the drawing-room after dinner against the lake. Well, the frost went on night after night, and the elders were being gradually worked up to countenance the idea of an early dinner and a bonfire and torchlight skate afterwards. But too late; next morning moisture was dripping from the eaves, and blank disappointment reigned—the thaw had come.

The memory of all this "feasting frolic and fun" so wrought on the pike fisherman, still clearing his rings of ice on the river bank, that, hastily packing up, he made tracks for a warm fire at the hotel, and later bore with equanimity the jeers of the more heroic live-baiters on his "tenderness." Indeed, their



A. Gordon Smith. "THE BLACK ICE RINGING TO THE STROKE."

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hardihood had availed them little. The pike were not to be tempted from their ice-covered strongholds under the banks. Long frosts have been rare enough in the South of late years for each to be easily remembered; that one in 1879, when miles of Severn meadows could be crossed on skates, or the December of 1880, which saw roads blocked for weeks and bread being carried in sacks over the top of the hedges—a winter that bore comparison with the one in which "Girt Jan Ridd" won his bride.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

DO PTARMIGAN EMIGRATE?

THIS very interesting ornithological question has not, I think, ever been satisfactorily answered. On several mountains that I know of where only a comparatively few pairs of ptarmigan are met with, and these very close to the summit, it would be interesting to know whether these pairs remain on the hill the whole year through, or whether they go to and from the other mountains in the vicinity. Morven (2,862ft.) in Aberdeenshire is far removed indeed from any other hills where the ptarmigan nest, so that the three or four dozen pairs which rear their broods on it must either remain there always or else fly a distance of a dozen miles at least in order to gain another hill where the species nest. Due westwards, Ben Avon (3,800ft.) stands about fifteen miles off, and if the birds emigrate at all they would probably go to this mountain, as it is connected with Morven by a chain of lesser hills, on one of which, "the Brown Cow," ptarmigan are sometimes seen, although I do not know that they nest there. Then again, due south (about ten miles away) lies Mount Keen (3,077ft.), but between this hill and Morven is the valley of the Dee, so I should think it very improbable that the birds would fly between these two hills, as to do so they would have to pass over cultivated lands, which they would probably be unwilling to do. What seems to support the theory that they do emigrate is the fact that during some seasons there appear to be more nesting ptarmigan on Morven than in others, and it is rather interesting that on this hill, and on this one alone, so far as I am aware, one or two pairs are constantly seen on a certain part of the hill at an altitude of not more than 1,800ft. above sea level, while on Loch-na-Gar, Ben Avon and their other strongholds they are rarely, if ever, seen below 3,000ft., and certainly not below 2,000ft. I have noticed that on this particular low-lying ridge the ground and plants are very well suited to the ptarmigan, and another reason which may possibly influence them is that perhaps there are too many pairs for the ground near the summit, and that some of the birds have to descend lower in order to find unoccupied quarters.

A BLACK-HEADED GULL'S LARGE CAPTURE.

During the winter season, until the commencement of March, when they migrate inland to their nesting grounds, numbers of the black-headed gull haunt the vicinity of Aberdeen Harbour, where they find food in plenty during the severe weather. The entrance to the harbour is also the estuary of the River Dee, and here one day recently a great commotion was noticed among the gulls. The whole flock was seen wheeling and screaming around one of their number, which was observed to be struggling desperately with something in the water. The bird was making determined efforts to rise with its prey, but was unable to do so on account of the latter's size. Finally the gull flapped along the surface of the water carrying in its bill a large fish. As soon as it reached land the captor was scared off and the fish recovered. It proved to be a pike, and when placed in water seemed little the worse

for its experience. It says much for the gull's pluck and voraciousness that it should go for a fish of this kind, and it is also most unusual for a pike to be seen so near the mouth of the Dee.

EARLY BURNING OF THE HEATHER.

About the middle of January the weather on the grouse moors was ideal. Soft winds from the west, and bright sun all day with hardly any frost at night, made one feel that spring was here, and several keepers took advantage of this state of the weather to get to work at heather-burning, though it is exceptional indeed for heather fires to be set a-going during the month of January. Within recent years, 1906 excepted, the weather has been very bad indeed for heather-firing, and in 1905, on some moors, not a single patch was burnt on account of the severe snowstorms. In that year I remember there were many bright, sunny days during February when the conditions for a fire were ideal, but the keepers, as a rule, are a conservative race, and dislike to do anything before its recognised time. March and the first fortnight of April sees most fires going, but after the latter date burning is illegal, although on application to the sheriff of the county, a week's, or even a fortnight's, extension is granted. Sometimes, should the autumn be exceptionally fine, a stray fire may be seen as early as October, but this is rarely the case. When the heather is burned for the sake of young grass for the red deer, immense stretches of moorland are set ablaze, and fires many miles in extent may often be seen burning furiously and the smoke extending for many a mile. The keepers, however, think nothing of them, and, after seeing that the fire is bounded by a stream or snowfield, will calmly go off home, leaving it burning for perhaps several days. Although, as a matter of course, the heather burns more fiercely in windy weather, still

a day with only a slight breeze is preferred, as when the wind is strong the fire shoots along too rapidly, burning only the top of the heather and leaving the stems almost untouched.

THE PAIRING OF THE GROUSE

Consequent on the open, springlike weather of January, a great many of the grouse have already paired on the low-lying moors, but above 2,000ft. most of the birds are still going in packs. I have noticed when on the hills lately that the cock bird's call-note is already much louder and more defiant than was the case earlier in the season, showing that he feels the responsibility of his new position. It is interesting to note in how much higher a key some of the call-notes are uttered than others, and two grouse may rise within a few yards of each other, the one uttering his cry in a deep bass note, while the other calls in quite a treble key. Also lately I watched a cock grouse on the ground for some time which kept using a note very like that of the hen bird, and which I do not remember having heard before.

THEIR CHIEF ENEMY.

A pair of golden eagles have recently appeared on a well-stocked grouse moor, and I hear that, in defiance of the Act strictly protecting them, the keepers are most anxious to "secure" them if they do not leave the moor at an early date. On this particular moor one day recently I perceived a pair of eagles soaring along the hillside, the nearest bird being only a few yards off. My sudden movement caused her to soar abruptly up, the rush of the air through her wings being clearly heard. A deathly stillness had fallen on all the grouse, and, as the eagles passed, they were to be seen flying frantically in all directions. The eagles seemed to look on them with amused disdain, and sailed onwards with never a motion of their wings.

SETON P. GORDON.

SHOOTING.

POSITIONS OF LOADERS IN SHOOTING.—II.

BY F. E. R. FRYER.

THERE is no doubt that in a big day's shooting, or in any day in which the use of a second gun is a necessity, the assistance of a thoroughly experienced loader and one accustomed to the ways of his master, is a great help to good shooting, and a comfort in many ways besides—the knowledge that you have behind you a man in whose ability to handle safely a loaded gun you have every confidence being by no means the least. In this latter respect, I often think it is a good deal the master's fault if, with an inexperienced loader, an accident occurs. He should be careful to go through some form of drill before taking him out in the field, and see that cartridges are not put in the spare gun till he takes up his stand, and that they are taken out the moment it is over. Unfortunately, there are many shooters who are very careless in this respect themselves, and in many other ways besides. Only the other day the writer was a witness of a case in point. The master brought out a young footman as a loader for the first time, and did not even take the precaution, when firing one barrel only, of putting



W. A. Rouch.

LOADER STANDING ON RIGHT.

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the other at "safe" before giving it back to him, with the result that, before very long, the contents of the second barrel passed within an inch of his head. He will probably be more careful in future; but there are many who do equally stupid things every day, and the worst of it is they are as much a danger to the careful as they are to themselves. While speaking of accidents, a not very pleasant subject, I admit, but one that should always be in the mind of every shooter, it may interest some to hear of a practically unavoidable one which happened, luckily without any evil result except to the gun itself, to the late Mr. John Penn when shooting some years ago at Merton in Norfolk. There was a strong wind blowing sideways, and a pheasant, killed by the next gun up wind, fell with great force on the stock of his second gun in the hands of his loader, breaking it completely away from the locks and mechanism, and discharging both barrels at the same time—a nasty jar for all concerned.

Now, with regard to the position a loader should take up with reference to his master, there are, I have noticed, many different ways in which the gun is taken by the one and received by the other, even among the very best shots, and it is with some diffidence that I am writing to explain what I consider the right way, to show by the accompanying photographs this, and also how some well-known shots



W. A. Rouch.

A GOOD EXAMPLE OF CHANGING GUNS.

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and men of great experience prefer a different style—I might say, a style entirely their own. Although showing a photograph of Lord de Grey at work with three guns, I do not propose to enter into this point, as with ejector guns a second loader is seldom wanted, even if a third gun is taken out so as to prevent overheating. I have heard of a sportsman who used his three guns with only one loader; his plan was to throw down the first gun and go on with the other two till there was time to pick it up and reload it again.

I train my loader to stand close up behind me, in fact almost touching, and to move as I move, so that if I turn sharply to shoot on either side I do not even see him, and he is ready to give me my second gun on whichever side I have

fired the first. I have noticed that a large majority of shooters, if they fire away to the left of them, turn all the way round again to take their gun on the right, causing not only a great waste of time, but obliging them to lose sight of what is coming. It very often happens, especially in part-ridge-driving, that a stream of birds come together on one side or the other, and the gun should be given on that side, even if the left. The gun should be put into your left hand as near as possible where you



CHANGING ON LEFT SIDE.

want it, not taken by you, and it is for this reason that I like my loader as close up as possible. The empty gun should be given away by you with the right hand holding the grip, the loader taking it into his left hand round the barrel, his right then being free to reload it. It is curious to note that in the two photographs I have before me of Lord de Grey changing guns, in both he is giving away his gun with his right hand in front of the trigger guard; so, I take it, this is his habit, but it must entail a slight extra movement.

Having given my own way of doing it, I will now explain the methods of two very well-known shooters, who make their respective loaders stand, or in one case kneel, in a position quite out of the common. Both tell me that if I only tried it I should never do otherwise, but I do not think I shall ever be converted to either style. To take the kneeler first, the admirable photograph of the process which is shown is a great help in the explanation. The shooter, on taking up his position for the drive, makes his loader kneel on one knee only, right in front of him. He maintains that in this position he can exchange guns much quicker than when he has the man behind him;



W. A. Rouch.

THE KNEELING POSITION

Copyright.

again to get his second gun, and if to the right, the loader has to stoop to be fired over.

I suggested once, "Doesn't his head get in your way?"

"Well," he replied, "it is his own head, and he has learnt by now to take care of it."

But it would not facilitate quick loading, I should say. I made some enquiries as to how these two loaders liked their respective positions. The kneeler, I found, had often been heard to say that "his knee did ache awful at times," and very much the same information was forthcoming about the other poor fellow's head. But they have kind masters in other respects, and I do not suppose either would care to change his "situation." There

is one other way of changing guns which I have heard advocated, but have never seen it carried out in the field—i.e., to give the empty gun to the loader backwards over the right shoulder, and receive the other over the left; this obviates turning round, no doubt, but I do not think it a good plan; and in the case of a short loader—an otherwise great advantage—and a tall shooter, it would be very awkward indeed.

The last two photographs shown on this page are illustrations of ill-trained loaders, and as they were both taken when their masters were actually firing, it gives one some idea of the dangers that are passed through by the shooter who does not take some pains to train his loader before taking him out. There is another very objectionable habit which this class of loader has; he has some slight idea that it is not right to snap up the reloaded gun in a line with his master's back, but it never occurs to him that it is equally dangerous to do so in a straight line with his next-door neighbour; and it speaks volumes for the fine workmanship put into the modern gun, that accidents caused in this way are not of frequent occurrence, and I would, in conclusion, earnestly impress on all shooters the necessity of having a look

and, moreover, he is much freer to shoot behind. This may be so, but he then has to turn round again to get his second gun. He must come to his loader; that the loader cannot get to him is quite clear. And in firing at low birds coming at him, I should think the position awkward for both loader and gun.

Now for the other position. This shooter makes his loader stand beside him on his right. This no doubt effects a very quick change if game is coming dead on; but if to the left, he has to turn right round back



LOADER IN DANGER.



W. A. Rouch.

RISKY FOR BOTH.

Copyright.

back occasionally to see what is going on behind them.

BLACK GAME AND CAPER- CAILLIE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

IN the course of last year we had occasion to notice more than once the interesting attempts to introduce black game and capercaillie into British Columbia. It is very satisfactory to be able to note now what may certainly be justly called the success of the scheme so far. The weather is said to have been rather against them when they were travelling over the mainland, but in spite of this the whole loss amounted to no more than nineteen birds out of a total original shipment of seventy-six of both species, and it is said that all the survivors were turned out in good health and vigour. The numbers were made up as follows: Eleven blackcock, twenty-four greyhen, eight cock "capers"



W. A. Rouch

THE SECOND LOADER BUSY.

Copyright

reason to infer. The black game have not always proved so adaptable, but we expect, as we hope, to hear of the successful establishment of both kinds.

[Further notes on Shooting will be found on our later pages.]

and fourteen hens. They have been turned out in the pine forest "away back" from the great Cowichen Lake, where there is not much chance of any being shot by mistake for blue grouse or willow grouse, and where the habitat seems well suited for them. They are protected for a period of ten years by a special Order in Council of the Government of British Columbia, dated September, 1906. Before the half of that close period has expired it ought to be possible to tell, with some accuracy, how these "pilgrim fathers" are likely to fare in their new home. That the "capers" will thrive, the Scottish experience in reimportation gives great

ON THE GREEN.

GOLF AT THE UNIVERSITIES.—II. CAMBRIDGE.

By F. KINLOCH.

THE good genius of Cambridge golf has certainly been Mr. W. T. Linskill. Fresh from St. Andrews at the time when "Young Tommy" was at the zenith of his fame and thoroughly inoculated with the fever of the game, Mr. Linskill must have brought some of the golf-inspiring air from the old grey town to the fens of Cambridge. As early as 1873 he induced some of his friends to come and try the "unknown game" at Coe Fen. In those early days the holes were made with a trowel and lined with empty potted meat tins. Coe Fen, for obvious reasons, not being suited for golf, Coldham Common was hit on as a degree better. The "commoners," being naturally suspicious of the innovation, were very difficult to deal with, but Mr. Linskill persevered, and, aided by Mr. A. H. Doleman, golf gradually established itself. All, however, was by no means smooth sailing. The players had at times exciting and stormy encounters with the locals, stone-throwing being quite common. In spite of these difficulties the actual Cambridge University Golf Club was born in 1875, and as early as 1879 the club was able to build a pavilion. By that time there were as many as fifty members enrolled on its books, and thenceforth, until the golf boom set in about 1889, the numbers varied from fifty to ninety, according to the energy of the club officials. Up to 1879 Mr. Linskill, with rare devotion, did all a greenkeeper's work, rolling the greens, changing the holes and even remaking balls. But in that year the club felt itself prosperous enough to appoint a proper professional greenkeeper. Accordingly John Smith of Hoylake was duly established, a great step forward. Prior to this, in 1878, it should be noted that Mr. Linskill had managed to start the first 'Varsity match. (Note in my account of Oxford golf I, in error, mentioned 1879 as the year in which the first 'Varsity match was played.) It was played four a side at Wimbledon, and Cambridge were heavily defeated. Application was made about this time for colours, and the golf club was permitted to make use of the Cambridge light blue so long as the members did not take to themselves a "full" blue. The C.U.G.C. was nothing if not energetic; continual allusions are met with in the minutes to correspondence about matches with other clubs, e.g., against the Eton masters and against the London Scottish; but, except the 'Varsity match, nothing came of these attempts till 1883, when matches with Great Yarmouth and Felixstowe were arranged and duly played. Surely to the C.U.G.C. must be accorded the honour of being the pioneers of inter-club matches. The club could put a pretty good team into the field at that time, as there were one or two "seniors" (notably Mr. W. Welsh, now president of the club) who were above average form. Of course in those early days the club had its financial difficulties; but the generosity of its senior members, presidents and ex-presidents kept it from bankruptcy. Among the first of the presidents was J. E. C. Weldon, recently Bishop of Calcutta, and he found an enthusiastic successor in the Rev. A. Austen Leigh, the late Provost of King's, who was untiring in the interest, shown in a very practical manner, which he took in the concerns of the club.

From 1875 to 1889 the links at Coldham Common consisted of a nine-hole course, which could never, by the wildest stretch of imagination, be called good. In wet weather the course was half under water, and the putting greens were merely mud rolled flat. Nevertheless, as the golf boom spread over England the membership began to increase rapidly, so much so that it was found necessary to take in additional ground to make an eighteen-hole course, and, at the same time, a new pavilion at the cost of £900 was built.

During the next three years the high water of prosperity was reached owing to the presence of Mr. John L. Low. Devoted to the game, he threw himself into the interests of the club with characteristic energy, and during his stay at the 'Varsity the membership of the club was larger than at any time till 1904. But it needed the spur of a keen golfer to keep things going. The truth is that the links at Coldham Common were too bad to induce undergraduate golfers to join the club unless pressure was put upon them. Matters were bound to come to a crisis. In 1900 a cleavage took place which threatened to have rather serious results on the old 'Varsity Club. Some "seniors" laid out a new course on the Gog Magog hills, ostensibly for "seniors" only. After a time undergraduates were admitted, and then the membership of the original club began to dwindle. Efforts were made to amalgamate the two, but without success. No one would play at Coldham Common, and, for the credit of the 'Varsity, something had to be done to revive the dying club. Fortunately it possessed an energetic secretary in the person of Mr. H. F. Caldwell, and through his agency a new nine-hole course was found near Coton and opened for play in 1901. The result was an immediate accession of a large number of new members, so that additional ground had to be taken in. It is now an eighteen-hole course, and though the soil is not ideal for golf, year by year an improvement can be noted.

But golfers at Cambridge have a great deal to be thankful for. By the courtesy of the members of the Royal Worlington and Newmarket Golf Club members of the C.U.G.C. are allowed, on certain conditions, the use of their green, one of the very best nine-hole courses in Great Britain, and all the home 'Varsity matches are played there. The course can be reached by train in about an hour from Cambridge and in less by motor. The holes there are a very good length, the soil dry and gravelly, and the greens good, if perhaps a little tricky. There are records in very early days of professional matches at Cambridge. Thus, so far back as 1884, a match took place between two ex-champions, viz., Bob Martin, who was then the Cambridge "pro," and Willie Fernie, the champion of the year, at that time located at Felixstowe. Bob Martin, playing on his own course, won by two holes, and it is interesting to read in an account of the match that Martin made "unequalled use of his niblick in approaching the hole." It must be borne in mind that the mashie proper was, in those days, unknown.

Among the well-known golfers who have represented the 'Varsity at different times are W. Welsh, H. S. Colt, J. L. Low, B. Darwin, H. W. de Zoete, E. A. Apthorpe, N. F. Hunter, G. Hoffmann, and A. G. Barry, late amateur champion.

OXFORD AND DUBLIN UNIVERSITIES.

ONE of the matches out of the five which compose the programme of the Oxford University Golf Club, previous to the meeting of the team with the representatives of Cambridge at Hoylake in April, has some little special interest. This is the match arranged for a date, still left uncertain, against Dublin University. The match is to be played at Oxford, which is a pity for all parties concerned, for it is certain that there are far better courses to be found in the near neighbourhood of Dublin than exist even within a reasonable motor drive of Oxford. Still, it is likely enough that the idea may be that if the Dublin undergraduates come to Oxford for this first match, Oxford may go to Dublin—to Dollymount, or some fine green of a like seaside nature in Ireland—another year. Of course, there are very good links which they could easily make a halfway meeting-house between the two, such as Aberdovey or Harlech in Wales, or Hoylake itself.

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

One of the reasons why there is a little special interest attaching to this match arranged between the English and the Irish Universities is that there has for a long while been a wish and feeling among English players for a closer golfing *entente* with Ireland. Some years ago an application from Ireland for the amateur championship to be held once in six years or so on an Irish green came before the delegates for that competition, but they declared that it was outside their province and powers to consider it, and probably they were quite right in that decision. The Irish Channel is too big a bunker. It is also, unfortunately, too deep a bunker to be tunnelled as there is talk of tunnelling the other Channel. Nevertheless, there is a general feeling that the Irish greens are so good, the Irish golfers so good, and their sportsmanship and point of view of the game so "exactly what the doctor ordered," that we all wish there could be more of the interchange of courtesies of which this visit of Dublin University to Oxford is typical. To be sure, there is a good deal of coming and going—of our golfers taking part in their open amateur championships and their golfers in our bigger event. But we wish there could be more, and we hope there will be more when, either by the way of the mole or of the bird, of the submarine tunnel or of flight above the sea, we may cross that channel without the undulations now inseparable from its passage.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

EDITING THE RULES.

MANY attempts have been made since golf became a widespread and popular pastime all over the world to edit the rules of the game so as to make their meaning more clear to the inexperienced. Those attempts at logical codification of the golfing law and the collation of their diverse penalties in match and stroke play have sometimes been thorough and painstaking, sometimes general and descriptive, often a mixture of both qualities, but rarely, if ever, an assured and certain guide to the doubting minds of disciples. One of the best attempts ever made to collate penalties and clear up doubts of interpretation was the little book issued many years ago under the authority of Sir Norman Lockyer and the late Mr. William Rutherford, the hon. secretary of the Royal St. George's Golf Club; but even the scientific exactitude of Sir Norman, combined with the legal training and unique experience of the game on both sides of the Tweed possessed by Mr. Rutherford, did not hinder many critics from showing that, though the commentary of the combined authorities might be according to the law, there was only too great reason to fear that golf furnished a conspicuous example of the truth of the proverb that "Every law has a loophole." Mr. Laidlaw Purves has been working for the better part of a lifetime at this piece of necessary enlightenment of what the rules mean and how best their phraseology and penalties can be amended in the direction of simplification and fairness. Last year Mr. John Low and Mr. Ernley Blackwell, two members of the Rules of Golf Committee, edited the rules in the light of recent interpretations by the ruling authority at St. Andrews given on actual cases occurring in play. All these efforts are as good as anything that could be necessarily achieved in the way of practical interpretation by experienced players who are themselves law-makers; so that the average golfer, who always finds great difficulty in clearing up disputed points, is forced to conclude that the fault lies not so much with the attempts at codification, interpretation and collation of penalties as with the radically faulty construction of the rules themselves.

The latest serious attempt which has been made "to show by means of notes and cross-references in what respects the rules are supplemented and varied by the Special Rules," and "to assist the golfer in acquiring a knowledge of the Law and the Gospel under which he plays," is contained in a little book recently sent to COUNTRY LIFE, edited by "Niblick," and issued at the "Sheffield Independent Press." Like all his predecessors who have attempted a similar work, "Niblick" is perturbed by the complexities and incongruities that confront him. "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" is not his, for occasionally his footnotes to the rules assume the complexion of a bitterly caustic commentary, as when he says of Rule 21, "This rule is a horrible jumble." Thus "Niblick" plays the double part of interpreter and critic, with the result that he sometimes lapses into sheer ineptitude. It is quite true to say that there is neither

definition of ball nor club in the rules, but what practical end is served by putting the interpretation of the size of the ball negatively in this way: "The ball, however, must not exceed 4½ in. in diameter, as otherwise it could not get into the hole"? Is it ever likely that the golfer will even attempt to play with a ball larger than a cricket ball, however ingeniously it might be manufactured? It is also true that there is neither a definition of "one round of the links" nor of "stipulated course," but a generation or two of invariable custom has almost universally decreed that the round shall be either nine or eighteen holes. The round at Blackheath has been for generations, of course, one of seven holes, so that the medal round becomes one of twenty-one holes; but exceptions to the general rule of eighteen holes as being "the round" are not often met with. The late Tom Dunn used to tell an amusing story on this point. When, as professional of the London Scottish, he laid out the Wimbledon course nearly half a century ago, a round of eighteen holes was marked out. The secretary asked Dunn why he fixed upon the number "eighteen," and when told that this was the number of holes at St. Andrews, the secretary retorted that Wimbledon must be ahead of St. Andrews by having a round of nineteen holes!

"Niblick" is not on absolutely safe ground when he states that in the absence of a local rule "a player in a stroke competition cannot lift off a putting green not being played to except under a penalty of two strokes, but the ball must be played where it lies." Playing the ball off the wrong putting green should never be attempted, and certainly should not be countenanced through any notion of adhering strictly to the rules. A ball on the wrong green is usually a bad shot that deserves to be punished, not to be favourably treated by having a teed lie. The ball on the wrong putting green, moreover, cannot be included in the definition of "lying through the green." In strictness it is off the course, and deserves no favourable treatment. Besides, the members of a club owe some duty to the preservation of their property, and it would be intolerable were members allowed to hack a putting green with iron clubs simply because, by a slice of good luck, their ball happened to reach another putting green perhaps 100 yds. off the straight line of play. "Niblick" seems to be unaware, moreover, that this point has of late been often submitted to the Rules of Golf Committee, and that the ruling authority has recommended the adoption of a local rule allowing a ball on the wrong green to be lifted and placed on the course not nearer the hole to which the player is going. Such a local rule has been universally adopted in the interests of good green-keeping as well as fair play, and, therefore, the interpretation given by "Niblick" is misleading. The commentator also complains that there is no definition of "loose impediments." But every golfer knows, without definition, what they are. Generally they are loose leaves, twigs, pebbles, pieces of mud left by the boots of preceding players and so on. A vicious dog or an angry bull would also be a "loose impediment," but not many players would care to brave the risk of "removing" either. "Niblick" is quite right in believing that "solving the club" means grounding the club; it is a Scotticism very well known on Northern greens. There are some other points of detail in the interpretations which make it doubtful whether the commentator is wholly familiar with the ordinary practice in actual play. On Rule 32, dealing with a ball out of bounds, he says that if the players cannot agree as to whether a ball is lost or out of bounds "there would appear to be deadlock." This is not so. An obligation always rests on the player who has hit his ball out of bounds to show that there can be no doubt about its destination. If there is any doubt, or any dispute, the opponent has a right to claim that the lost ball shall either be found or the hole given up.

A. J. ROBERTSON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COST OF COUNTRY LIFE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE,"]

SIR,—Being desirous of settling in the country, I shall be greatly obliged if you can inform me if there is any book in the COUNTRY LIFE Library or elsewhere which gives information, hints and advice about country houses, the cost of upkeep, etc., according to the size of house, staff of servants, horses and carriages, extent of gardens and grounds, park, farmery, lodge, or cottage, greenhouses, etc. Also as to the points to be specially noted in choosing a country house.—G. C.

[Upon receiving this letter we asked our correspondent to give further particulars, and were informed that "the following is some such property as I have in my eye: An old-fashioned house, modernised, two stories, four reception-rooms, ten bedrooms, four indoor servants, gardener, with boy, manservant to act as coachman and handyman, carriage and one horse, lodge or cottage in grounds, gardens of about two and a-half acres, and meadow land up to sixteen acres, two or three greenhouses, stabling for three, cow-house and fowl run, acetylene gas." The house is in the South of England. We know of no book that gives the required information; but from a rough calculation we should imagine that about £1,000 a year would be required to live comfortably in this establishment. Perhaps some of our more experienced readers may be able to help our correspondent.—ED.]

BIRD-TABLES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In our garden we have improvised a bird-table—a stake fixed in a large flower-pot and a piece of wood 1ft. square fastened on the top. From a nail at the edge hangs half a cocoanut suspended with string from three holes made by piercing with a hot skewer. When the nut has disappeared this can be filled with suet or dripping. We also fasten nuts with pins round the edge and string them on worsted and twist in a garland. Almonds and Brazil nuts appear the favourites, but we put a variety. On the board itself are bits of bread and kitchen scraps. The robin shares this table with the tits, but all other birds, we find, prefer their food on the ground. Nothing comes amiss in the way of food; strips of bacon rind are eagerly caught at and struggled over. "A. C." will find no preparation necessary beyond collecting scraps of bread, pudding and fats from the kitchen.—HELEN STURMEY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In the last issue of your paper I saw a letter from "A. C." asking how a bird-table should be made and stocked. Perhaps he will be interested to hear how I feed my "pensioners," most of whom are tits, with an occasional robin. When I had enticed a number of tits—great and blue—to the garden by means of hanging cocoanuts, I erected a table, which consisted of a small board about 8in. square, on top of a stake. If "A. C." has any idea of photographing tits at his table, he will find it useful to put a small perch at one side of the table and make the edge of the table uncomfortable all round except where the perch is fixed, by securing on it twigs of holly, yew, etc. In this way the tits will grow accustomed to alighting on the perch, and thus photographing them is simplified, for the perch may be focussed, and the camera made ready for the birds' arrival. The food I place on the table consists mainly of small pieces of cocoanut, almond, or any nut, which the tits take and consume on the trees near. They never stay and feed at the table. Occasionally I vary their diet with a little suet or bacon fat, or a bone with fat on it.—PHILORINIS.

THE LONG-EARED OWL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was interested to read in last week's COUNTRY LIFE T. A. Metcalfe's letter on long-eared owls, but I should like to correct him in one particular. He infers from his experience that fragments of food are never left in the nest, and that their prey is not torn to pieces in the nest. The only time I have seen the inside of a long-eared owl's nest after the young were hatched I found the mutilated fragments of two birds, one of which was a wheatear, and only its legs and mauled feathers were left. The clutch of eggs, which I believe to be the first and only clutch laid by the bird, was hatched in the first week in May. If it was the first clutch it would seem to be late according to the dates he gives, and if a previous clutch had been taken and the three weeks had elapsed, the previous clutch would be early.—P.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reply to the enquiry of your correspondent "B.," I think his best course, if circumstances permit, would be to leave the door of the owls' enclosure open some night and so allow them to find their own way out. If this were done the owls would no doubt make their way to the wood he mentions in due time; but if hungry, and until they had learned to catch food for themselves, they would almost certainly return to their house to look for it, and if they found it regularly there they might possibly continue to reside in it during the day long after they had learned to hunt for themselves. I have more than once had long-eared and other kinds of owls, and though enjoying their full liberty and procuring most of their own sustenance, they have continued quite tame with those with whom they were familiar, and constantly resorted to their old roosting quarters for months, sometimes years, after they had become full grown.—L. G.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—If your correspondent "B." would like to send me his young long-eared owls instead of turning them loose I think I can undertake that they shall have a happy home. I have a great fondness for owls and have kept many, and I could give these two a good-sized aviary and suitable food; probably they would soon become tame with personal attention, such as I gather your correspondent cannot give them owing to his absence at school. I have not usually found owls do well if liberated after having been reared in confinement, and I fear these would meet with much persecution from others of their kind if turned loose, and would probably come to a sad end. If "B." is willing to agree to my proposal and will let me know when to expect the birds I will have them met at the station (Lyndhurst Road, S.W.R.) and will pay carriage on them.—ETHEL F. CHAWNER, Forest Bank, Lyndhurst, Hants.

A PARROT'S DEVOTION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—To those who are interested in animals and their ways the following will show the extraordinary affection of a parrot for her fellow-companions. For fifteen years my parents and I had in our possession a pair of King Charles spaniels, a cat and a parrot. These animals grew up together, the dogs and cat eating out of the same plate, lying side by side in front of the fire, all devoted friends. Polly used to call the dogs and cat by name, and laughed and pecked at them when they went near her. If the dogs whined to go out into the garden Polly whined also; if I called the animals, Polly mocked me. She dearly loved to scold them in a hoarse voice, saying, "You brute, ah you," then, changing her voice, would say, "Poor little dog." Alas! one little dog died, and a few years later age and its infirmities began to tell on our faithful little friends. But age had no effect on Polly; she ate everything except meat, and was never sick nor sorry. At last the sad day arrived when it was kinder to put a merciful end to the cat and dog, the latter being nearly blind and deaf and the cat suffering from general discomfort. It was with a very sad heart that we said farewell to

our faithful little friends. The very day the animals ceased to live we noticed a change in Polly; she made a strange kind of chuckle in her throat. We tried tempting her with fruit and her favourite eatables; but no, she took everything and threw it at once to the bottom of her cage. She never spoke, but just mourned. At last we gave her brandy and milk, of which she feebly took a few drops. On the very day three weeks after the cat and dog died Polly was heard to faintly mutter "Go down." She then gradually fell from the ring in the cage where she had been sitting and fell to the bottom of the cage, where she lay for an hour and died. As far as I know Polly was twenty-one years old, that is the length of time she was in our possession. I feel sure this is a case of an animal dying of grief, for never had she ailed before.—T. M. M. ROWLAND, Ryde.

BIRDS SHAMMING DEATH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It may be of interest to your correspondent who saw a sparrow feigning death to hear my experience with a corn-crake which my cat brought into the house and, unfortunately, had much sport with before I found him. The bird was in a sad plight, much hurt and seemingly dead. I shut the cat out of the room, and on returning to the bird found it standing up, but on my coming near it fell down and shut its eyes. I thought it was dead, but when I took it up found it alive. I gave it some water and put zinc ointment on its hurts, the bird feigning death on and off all the time; but when I put it in the long grass it stood up and walked away apparently all right. The same cat brought in a corn-crake again another year. Much the same thing occurred. The bird went on with the same antics, but this time I was able to effect a rescue at once, so the bird escaped unhurt. There is no doubt that birds do pretend, and are humbugs when need be.—E. WATT.

UNHEALTHY WALNUT TREES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In a recent issue I saw a reference to the mulching of large trees. I have a couple of very old walnut trees here standing in a paddock on a rather shallow oolitic soil, 800ft. above the sea. They look very sickly, with a great quantity of dead branches. I believe most walnut crops failed last year, so the fact that mine did also proves nothing. There was a fair crop of dried-up shrivelled nuts. I should be grateful if you can inform me whether mulching now with stable manure or some chemical manure is likely to benefit the trees, and whether any other measures are desirable. It has occurred to me that the old saw about beating walnut trees might refer not only to the gathering of the crop, but to a kind of rough pruning.—F. M., Gloucester.

[Your walnut trees are evidently in poor condition. You should prune away all the old wood very carefully and coat the wounds with tar, dressing any decayed parts at the same time. When this has been done remove the surface soil within the radius of the branches to the depth of the surface roots without injuring them. This soil should then be replaced with a mixture of well-rotted manure and good loam in the proportion of three parts of the latter to one part of the former. Do this work at once, and about the middle of May give a top-dressing to the depth of 6in. of well-rotted leaves and dung. Should the summer prove dry give one or two thorough waterings. It is not at present advisable to give chemical manure.—ED.]

PRESERVING AND RENEWING OLD HEDGES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It is rather sad to see COUNTRY LIFE advocating the mending of a fence with wire when a hedge is too old, worn out or too long neglected. If your writer on this subject in the issue of the 26th ult. will repair the fence, of which he gives an illustration and foot-line "Better Put Up Wire," with willow, he will find it cheaper and more permanent than wire fencing. In almost every soil willow stakes will root if driven fairly deep, say, 1½ ft. to 2½ ft. Fences so made can be cut and trimmed or "laid" whenever necessary. If the stakes be cut about 1½ in. in thickness they will effectually stop any temporary gap. No lover of the country will tolerate wire if an efficient substitute can be found, and if my experience with willows is of any use I shall be happy to place it at the disposal of your readers.—HERBERT S. STONEHAM.

[Our own opinion was that the particular fence referred to was too far gone to patch up again, and that the only thing to be done was to grub it. Then the alternatives would be to plant again, in which case it would have to be wired each side for protection against stock (the old wooden ox rails being far too expensive), or to substitute a wire railing permanently. If our correspondent is thinking of the hunting he must be aware that there is no danger in a bare wire fence (not barbed) either to hounds or horses. What is dangerous is the mending of gaps with it, or the running a strand through the hedge.—ED.]

LOST DOGS, AND THEIR HOME.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Just before Christmas I was alighting from a Metropolitan train at West Brompton Station and saw a fine black and tan collie chasing up and down the platform, apparently in search of his owner. The train having started, the dog leaped upon the line, and all onlookers fully expected to see him cut up or electrocuted, especially when he stared eastward down the tunnel. When he neared the end of the platform I called him to me and, tempting him with some desiccated liver which I usually carry in my pocket, slipped a piece of string round his neck and secured him from immediate danger. He showed his politeness by sitting on his haunches and offering his right paw, proving that his education had not been neglected. The dog being without a collar and my string thin, I repaired to a shop opposite the station and purchased a couple of yards of clothes line and a shilling leather collar, and then asked the railway staff what had better be done? They said, "Turn him out in the street and let him find his way home." To this I demurred, and gave Jock into the care of an intelligent policeman whom I consulted, P 503, who rejoiced in the classic name of Jack Sheppard. I parted from my charge with feelings of regret, and Jock marched off to the police-station

as though he were not disinclined to cultivate new friendships; but evidently Jack Sheppard was fond of dogs, and dogs instinctively know when they meet a "doggy" man or woman. On writing to his kind custodian a fortnight afterwards I had a polite letter to say that the dog was sent in a van to the Dogs' Home on the following day. The supposition was that if not claimed by the owner he would probably be sold, as he was too good a dog to be destroyed; and, moreover, one on whom some pains had been bestowed in the matter of education. (The religious question does not come in. I would fine owners of



all uneducated dogs if I had my way.) As I happened to be in Battersea last Saturday afternoon my curiosity as to Jock's fate led me to visit the Dogs' Home and enquire what had become of him? The clerk at the counter was extremely kind, but desperately busy; indeed, no one connected with the place eats the bread of idleness, and the courteous chairman, whom I accidentally met in the pens and happened to address (he being like myself a visitor), appeared busier than any. No one who has not visited the Dogs' Home can have a clear conception of the work of this beneficent institution. My fears for Jock in regard to his escaping the lethal chamber were soon set at rest. Jock had been sold on the seventh day after receipt! I still have a feeling of curiosity about his destination, as I also have concerning his original home. How came he to be lost, and without a collar? He was a civil dog, and I trust he is in clover. But the officials at the Home, kind as they are to the poor dogs, have not time to satisfy the sentiments of the visitors. So the curtain has fallen once more on Jock's history. Alas! it is often so with men and women; but in the case of the poor dogs often from no fault of their own. The noise at the Dogs' Home caused by hundreds of dogs all barking in chorus is deafening; you can scarcely hear yourself speak. It is a study indeed and a somewhat sad experience to go the round of the pens, many of the dogs looking about aimlessly; here and there an intelligent face would push to the bars and almost say in words, "I am very unhappy here; do take me out." The sexes are segregated. The majority of the dogs received are destroyed—those that find neither owner nor purchaser. I inspected the lethal chamber and the crematorium; the former, charged with fumes of chloroform, has a sliding door that admits a cage containing perhaps a hundred "T.B.D.'s": that is the lettering on the pens—"To be destroyed"—where the doomed dogs are confined, and every night the work goes on. Gruesome but necessary business and admirably done. Poor doggy's bones are sold, but the fiery ordeal destroys their manurial value. I glanced at the balance-sheet for 1905, and a more business-like statement would be hard to find. What surprised me most was the absence of any contribution from the Board of Agriculture. Such a society ought to get official encouragement. Roughly speaking, every week 500 dogs are received. In January almost double that number, as so many impecunious or heartless people send their dogs adrift then to avoid the annual tax. In the course of a year 1,500 are restored to their owners, 2,400 are sold to new masters, 2,300 are brought to the Home on purpose to be destroyed, and no less than 22,000 are put out of their misery by the humane method I have described. The dog is man's most faithful attendant:

"With eye upraised, his master's looks to scan,
The joy, the solace and the aid of man;
The rich man's guardian and the poor man's friend,
The only creature faithful to the end."

All who are fond of dogs are, in my opinion, under a debt of gratitude not only to the late Mrs. Tealby, who founded the Home nearly half a century ago, but to the committee and its staff who carry on the work. Do we assist them as we should?—that's the point.—E. D. TILL.

THE HARVEST MITE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can you inform me what insect or parasite found on chalky soil (on the Chilterns) is the cause of a red irritating eruption on the skin during the

summer months? Though both my family and myself have suffered, as do many others, from this I have never been able to detect any insect causing it. Is there any preventive?—X.

[It is undoubtedly the harvest mite, which, though often unpleasantly abundant elsewhere, does in particular frequent chalky soils. The creature is so minute as to be barely visible to the naked eye, though it can be seen especially against a dark surface. On the human skin it is practically invisible. It is red in colour (as Gilbert White noted long ago), not unlike a very small edition of what is popularly (and wrongly) known as the "red spider," the gardener's enemy. The harvest mite bores into the skin and sucks, producing a very irritating spot which sometimes lasts for many days. Chemists sell various lotions to alleviate the pain, and they sometimes claim for them that they will, if used in advance, prevent a person being bitten. We have never found one effective. The best plan is to dab the places with ammonia or benzine. Either gives temporary relief, and by killing the mite reduces the duration of the irritation.—ED.]

A CHAMELEON CHANGING ITS SKIN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Notwithstanding that the Transvaal is the land of the chameleon, I have met but few people, natural history students or otherwise, who have witnessed the actual proceeding of one changing its skin while in its natural state. Is it that the little fly-catcher retires into solitude during this stage? Or that the duration of time occupied in casting off its old skin is so short? Or that its colour is of an almost invisible shade making it difficult to find? When I discovered this one it had the appearance of being sick and lifeless, and of a dirty grey colour, caring little for friend or foe, but immediately the skin had relaxed its hold and it had, so to say, walked out of it, it became a most brilliant dark green hue, suddenly assuming a totally different and lively attitude, and awaked into a new life of activity, showing signs of ferociousness and self-protection, escaping to a high place at an unusually fast pace, doubtless in quest of food and safety. I hope this photograph may be of interest to some of your readers who keep the chameleon as pets.—G. W. EDGSON, Krugersdorp.

CAT TAKING THE WATER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was surprised a few weeks ago, when examining the banks of a stream for tracks of otters in the snow, to see that a cat had landed from a deep pool and had again entered the water higher up and crossed to the other side. This had evidently taken place during the previous night, and as far as could be seen from the tracks there was no motive on the cat's part for entering the water, unless in pursuit of fish, or to try ground upon either side the stream. So far as I saw she had not landed any fish.—L. G.

CORNISH SHARKS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I beg to enclose a photograph, which I think may prove of interest. I took it last year at the little fishing village of Clovelly in North Devon. It may, perhaps, astonish many to learn that a species of shark is very



common in our home waters; they are said not to be the man-eating species, but to subsist on the shoals of mackerel which they follow. The fishermen scarcely ever go out without getting one or more in their nets, though they seldom succeed in hauling them on board. The two here shown each weighed about 1½ cwt., and were from 7ft. to 8ft. long. Naturally fish of this size, as a rule, make short work of a mackerel net, and these two managed to completely ruin a net before being despatched.—W. O. E. MEADE-KING.